HIGA LEDGER

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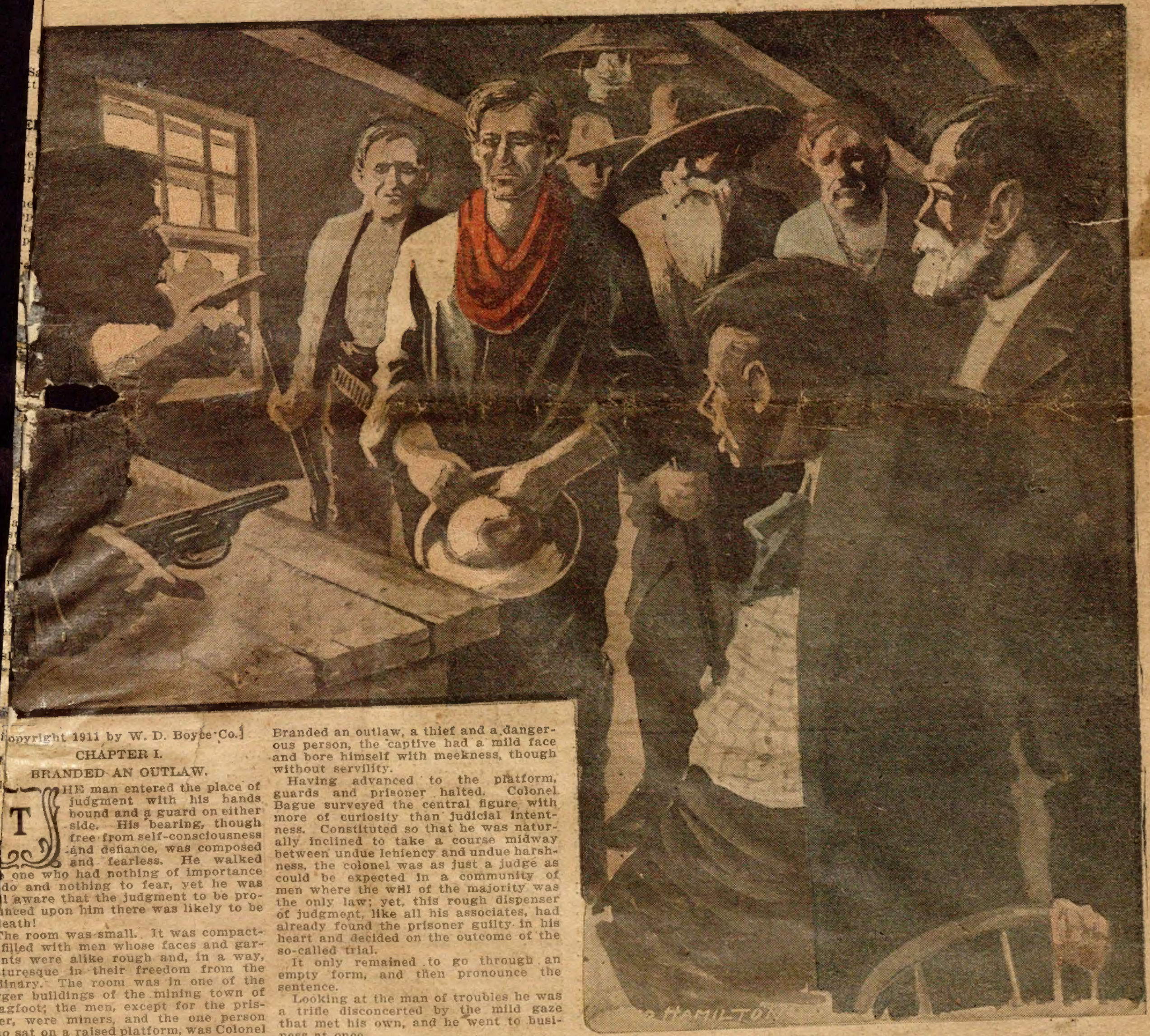
he Black Horse Queen;

Or, THE MOUNTAIN EXILES

By William H. Manning



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CHAPTER I.

BRANDED AN OUTLAW.

THE man entered the place of judgment with his hands bound and a guard on either side. His bearing, though free from self-consciousness and defiance, was composed and fearless. He walked one who had nothing of importance do and nothing to fear, yet he was l aware that the judgment to be pronced upon him there was likely to be eath!

The room was small. It was compact-filled with men whose faces and garents were alike rough and, in a way, turesque in their freedom from the dinary. The room was in one of the rger buildings of the mining town of hagfoot; the men, except for the prisner, were miners, and the one person ho sat on a raised platform, was Colonel ague, the judge of the occasion. The olonel's title dated back to the past; he as now a gold-seeker and no richer nor ore polished than his fellows.

Leland Dale, sometime physician and ometime hunter, and more recently iner, standing outside the building, eaned his arms on the window-sill and ooked at the prisoner.

He saw a man of middle age, tall, lender, spare of flesh and far from handsome. Half-unconsciously studying the ound man, he found it hard to realize hat he was what he was reputed to be. Branded an outlaw, a thief and a dangerous person, the captive had a mild face and bore himself with meekness, though without servility.

Having advanced to the platform, guards and prisoner halted. Colonel Bague surveyed the central figure with more of curiosity than judicial intentness. Constituted so that he was naturally inclined to take a course midway between undue leniency and undue harshness, the colonel was as just a judge as could be expected in a community of men where the will of the majority was the only law; yet, this rough dispenser of judgment, like all his associates, had already found the prisoner guilty in his heart and decided on the outcome of the so-called trial.

It only remained to go through an empty form, and then pronounce the sentence.

Looking at the man of troubles he was a trifle disconcerted by the mild gaze that met his own, and he went to business at once.

"I'm the jedge," he announced calmly. "What's your name?"

"Jabez Roebuck."

The answer was as calm as the question, and Leland Dale noticed that the voice was low, even, composed, and not without a touch of music.

"You are," proceeded the colonel, "one of the mountain outlaws who call themselves Hillmen."

"I am one of those who dwell on Mount Taber," admitted the prisoner, "and outsiders have given us the name of Hillmen, but we are not outlaws nor doers of evil."

"Ain't you thieves, robbers, takers of things that belong to honest men?" demanded the judge, growing tautological in his rising indignation. "How about the gold-dust, clothes, tools—yes, and the coined cash that this mining town has missed?"

"There are other men near Mount Taber," reminded Jabez Roebuck mildly.

"Oh! so you lay it onto them, do you? Well, I ain't got any great fancy for the people of the villages on t'other side of the mountain. The folks down in the valley ain't my style, and I don't believe in their principles an' ways. Still, they are rich, or pretty near rich; an' have all the necessaries of life. It is ridiculous that they should come to the little mining camp of Shagfoot to steal the small things that we have. Prisoner, it's no use to shift the blame onto them!"

"I make no charges, sir. If you have

[illegible] walked

"They have not g[illegible] asserted Roebuck, w[illegible]

"Humph! How do you me[illegible] Taber live?"

"By strict economy, by an unending fight with poverty and want, and by an unequal strife with a barren mountain."

"If the hidden ways of Mount Taber are as barren as its outer shell, it ain't a fertile garden. But if you find it barren, why don't you leave it? There are a dozen towns in the eastern valley, but there is still unoccupied land, and new settlers are craved. If you starve on the mountain, why not go to the valley?"

"Because to go there would be to seek death!"

"How? From whom?"

Jabez Roebuck suddenly straightened his tall figure and his face hardened. His mild eyes had brightened and taken on a glitter that told of deep emotion.

"From the people of the valley!" he exclaimed.

"Humph! I know they called you outlaws even before we came to the mountains to dig gold, and that they have suffered much from your thievish ways——"

"Never!" interrupted Roebuck quickly. "We have never taken a thing from them!"

"But," went on the colonel, unheeding the interruption, "them valley-men profess goodness by the bushel—I don't believe in their creed, mind you, but that don't count—an' they can't very well approve of extreme measures, even with outlaws."

"Is death not an extreme?" demanded the prisoner.

"It comes pretty near it," admitted Bague.

"That is what awaits us in the valley if we are caught by them. Not because we are outlaws, for they know we are not. Not because we have stolen from them; for they know we have never taken taken a penny. Not because we have ever interfered with them in any way, for we never have done that. No! But because we were once of them and are so no longer. Have you talked with them about us?"

"Yes."

"What do they say we are?"

"Outlaws of the mountains, layin' in wait to get a livin' off of honest men. All very natural in this wild Western land. Sence we-uns began mining here we've had to help the valley folks support you. Hope that's plain enough!" added the colonel angrily.

Jabez Roebuck sighed deeply and shook his head.

"Plain, but incorrect," he responded. "We are not outlaws nor thieves; we have not preyed upon the valley nor the miners. Did the valley men tell you that we were once part of themselves, but that we broke away because their sins sickened us? Did they tell you that we hide in the mountains because, being backsliders, we would be killed by them if they could seize us?"

"No, they didn't tell us that!" exclaimed the colonel impatiently, "an' you needn't do so either. Outlaws you've been, outlaws you are. Say no more; we know you. Not even the current story that, up there, you've got a beautiful young woman who dashes about on a black horse and is called Queen Sylvia, or some such name, can make you anything but plain, everyday outlaws. I'll skip the fact that, now and then, certain of our miners have been assaulted and robbed just beyond the camp. You were not seen to do it. But how about the things you've stolen from us?"

Again the prisoner sighed, and his figure drooped perceptibly.

"The Hillmen have assaulted nobody and stolen nothing!" he replied simply.

"Man, what's the use of lying? Ever sence we have been mining here at Shagfoot this thing has gone on; situated where we can get necessaries with difficulty, we have got them only to have them stolen by your gang. We have tired of it. A while ago we set men near your tangled, impenetrable retreat to catch somebody an' make him an example. We have ketched you, and we shall make you an example forthwith!"

"Then you will harm a man who has never harmed you. I am your friend; my people are your friends and neighbors."

"Very neighborly you have been!" retorted Bague. "Up on the mountain range you live like hermits, sticking close to your haunts, and protected, as long as you stick there, by a ring of surroundin' deep canyons and precipitous cliffs. Only your gang knows the way in an' out. We have hunted for you, hunted for the secret passages to your dens, but all in vain. Nature put up walls for you, and you hide behind them walls. Very neighborly you have been!"

"We dare not venture forth lest the people of the valley slay us."

"Now, what's the use of saying that? Wrong they may be in their queer religion, but they ain't vicious nowadays. We have found them a civil, polite, helpful folks."

"You are not backsliders, driven to revolt by their sinful ways, and—you give them money for what you want to buy!"

[illegible] jedge. I[illegible] dict on you. It was all talked [illegible] fore court was opened, and the [illegible] mous judgment of this community [illegible] miners was that you should be hanged for your thefts. That's lynch-law, and the only sort of regular United States Court to which we have access here. In sayin' this I bear in mind that them town-folks of the valley hate the United States, pay the aforesaid States no loyalty, an' are a people by themselves an' for themselves. I don't admire them for that. I am an American from my head to my feet, and I love the flag I have fought under. Let that pass."

Jabez Roebuck here tried to speak, and his eyes were brighter than before, but the colonel raised his own voice and talked him into silence.

"As to hanging, I don't like the idee, and sence I have set here it has occurred to me that, though you were taken near the lair of the Hillmen, and though you admit that you are one of them, there has been no proof submitted that you actually were caught in act of robbery. Such being the case, I will——"

There was a stir among the men in the room, and one of their number appeared beside the platform and broke in on the judge.

"Colonel, I beg—I beg that you will let me have a word on this painful subject!"

In a way, the speaker was the most noteworthy figure in the mining camp. Slight of build, and correspondingly fragile to look at, his narrow face, framed in with jet-black hair, was very pale—and all other men there were burly, in full health, and bronzed of skin. They were clad in the roughest of ill-fitting garments—and he in fastidiously-cut, once-trim, but now worn clothing like that of a minister. They, with a few exceptions, were unlearned and, in many cases, incapable of learning—but he had the look of a scholar.

Remarkably out of place he seemed to be in Shagfoot camp.

But, that day, education, refinement and gentle birth were in poor company. The man who asked leave to speak held to a chair after coming to a halt, and his head wobbled and his body swayed. Plainly, intoxication had him in its grasp. A pitiful, unmanly figure he was as he lurched about, yet there was a purpose in his mind, and his controlling idea struggled, but with imperfect success, to cast off the shackles of strong drink.

"I want to speak!" he added. "Having been a preacher in the East, and having personal knowledge of the desirability of goodness and the badness of sin, and knowing what it is to stagger under temptation and fall; but knowing that even the fallen may still preserve truth and merit recognition for their veracity, I beg that you will accept me as intercessor for this accused gentleman, who may be deeply wronged if we do him harm. Your honor, the judge, and those other gentlemen here assembled, let me act for the prisoner, and let us not judge him too harshly, lest we be judged——"

The wandering, uncertain address had been listened to with impatience that was poorly kept in check. The speaker's one important idea was so clogged with the weeds of his condition that it was made as nothing, and now it became even worse. The always-swaying figure gave a greater lurch, and, failing to recover its precarious equilibrium, fell noisily to the floor.

If the drunken man wore ministerial garments he was not in a church, and there was a loud laugh from the spectators. Most of them thought the whole interruption, and, especially, the climax, extremely comical.

"The bishop ain't in trim for a sermon today!" shouted one critic, and there was more laughing.

The fallen man was unceremoniously dragged to his feet by several men. His upset had muddled him more than before, and he only retained his balance by means of the help vouchsafed him. Swaying blindly, he was a creature without will or method.

"Now, see here, John Reddington!" cried Judge Bague, "this won't do! The solemnity of this court must be preserved. You go and sleep off your drunk. Boys, yank him out of this!"

It was undignified language for a master in court, but the colonel was disgusted and angry, and he spoke after the fashion of common men. "The bishop" was taken from the room with more haste than gentleness.

"Now, as to the prisoner," proceeded the colonel. "I am disposed to be merciful in this case. Judge Lynch shall have no part in these deliberations. We miners are comparatively newcomers in this region, but the men who live in the valley were here long ago. They know the outlaws of Mount Taber and their ways, and they have long wanted to capture them. My judgment is that this prisoner be turned over to the custody of Gilbraith, the nearest of the villages, to be dealt with as the authorities of that

[illegible] will, [illegible] the people of [illegible] Mercy, mercy!—not that, not

CHAPTER II.

"STRIKE HIM DOWN."

Leland Dale, still standing by the window, and leaning forward as he had leaned before, grew more interested as he saw Jabez Roebuck's sudden terror and heard his wild plea. Leland had not long been a miner of Shagfoot, and about all his knowledge of the camp was that gained by hearsay.

From the beginning he had heard unkind things said about the Hillmen of Mount Taber, and there had been no reason to suspect that these statements were unjust. Lost money, gold-dust, clothing and other things—all were charged up against the men of the mountain, and the losers fell to profane words and cried out for satisfaction. It seemed to be a vain cry, for they did not know how to get satisfaction.

The Hillmen were elusive, if nothing more. If they were outlaws they were singularly retiring of habit. Almost never seen, they kept to their isolated, impenetrable retreat with hermit-like persistency. It was a remarkable way for malefactors to act, yet it was said to be their way.

Looking at Jabez Roebuck, as he stood in Judge Bague's court, the ex-physician sought in vain for visible signs of depravity. Roebuck was mild of manner, and his face was anything but evil to look at. Leland Dale was perplexed, but —well, he was new in Shagfoot camp, and what all the miners said was either true or ought to be true.

Meditating thus, the ex-physician tried to harden his heart when he saw the prisoner on his knees and heard him plead for mercy—plead that he be not sent to Gilbraith.

"Don't give me up to the people of the town!" repeated Roebuck, and he held up his clasped hands to the colonel.

"I've drawed blood from the rock!" quoth Bague, smiling with satisfaction. "Your alarm shows that you have cause to fear the people of the valley. They say you have preyed on them as you have preyed on us. Afraid you will get your deserts, be you? Well, you shall! Now, no more talk! Away with him, boys! Court is adjourned!"

Leland Dale felt uncomfortable as he saw Roebuck dragged off, still pleading, but he remembered the accusations he had heard against the "outlaw" and steeled his heart. Much accused, they must be guilty. It was logical reasoning, perhaps, but he walked away in mental perturbation and wished he had not seen the farcical trial.

Mechanically, he turned his gaze eastward. There, a black thread across the blue of the sky, was Mount Taber. It was not a peak, but a range, cleft at one point by a great pass—a range that began and ended in the indistinguishable distance. Trees and other growing things had little part there; it was mainly a reach of bleak rocks. Somewhere up there, in that dreary waste, the Hillmen had their hidden home.

He gave half an hour to thought and then, suddenly remembering John Reddington, turned abruptly and sought that person's humble home. Between the two a bond of a certain sort had been established since Leland came to Shagfoot. Both had received the advantages of education. Now, one was a doctor who did not see fit to practice, and the other was a minister who had fallen victim to intemperance and lost the pastoral office he wished to retain.

Reaching Reddington's shanty Leland was about to enter when a young woman came out hastily. She met Dale, and the two stopped. Both were surprised, and she was a trifle embarrassed, but this mood quickly vanished. She caught at Leland's arm.

"Go in!" she exclaimed, her voice subdued. "Try to bring him into better condition. I can't wait here."

"I'll do my best, Miss Janet!" he replied.

Another moment and she was hurrying away. Dale entered the shanty. Reddington sat by a contrivance that was an apology for a table, his arms thereon and his bowed head on his arms. His black hair was rumpled and wet, for those who had taken him from the courtroom had thrown a pail of water over him to wash away the drink that befogged his brain. Leland spoke his name and he raised his head. He looked paler than ever, but the light of reason was in his eyes. Gloomily meeting the visitor's gaze, he shook his head.

"Again fallen!" he muttered. "You see, doctor, your good advice is wasted on such a sinner as myself!"

Leland sat down on the table.

"Bishop," he replied quietly, "you make a mistake there. Nothing has been wasted. The first lift does not always raise the burden. We will try it again."

"You have labored with me," pursued

[illegible] the fool speaks. [illegible] incoherent words, and [illegible] myself realize, and, besides, I ha[illegible] told practically the same by——"

He stopped and seemed annoyed that he had said so much.

"Colonel Bag[illegible]ghter [illegible] been here," said Leland.

"Yes," admitted Reddington reluctantly. "Don't blame her, doctor, and don't think it was more than common humanity that brought her; as good as she is, she would never let sentiment bring her to visit a fallen wretch like me—at least, she would be foolish if she did. She was passing; she heard me groan in bitterness of spirit; she came in briefly and spoke kindly. Janet Bague is a noble girl, but she is not—she shall not be my friend. Friend? Why do I talk? She is not so big a fool!"

"Bishop, one question!"

"Well, doctor?"

"You mentioned Jabez Roebuck. Heretofore, you have refused to tell me where you get your liquor. Now, be direct on one point: Is it from the Hillmen?"

"You have urged me to state that before," responded Reddington, after a pause. "I can tell you no more than I told you then, except that this I will say—I never saw nor heard of Jabez Roebuck until today. He is no liquor-purveyor."

"Then where—but you have refused to tell me where you get the stuff, and I will not dwell on it now. I wish, bishop, you had the moral courage to let it alone, but that will come in good time. Just now, my thoughts run much on the Hillmen. Their hermit life, their inaccessibility, the conflicting accounts of them, the report that there is a beautiful, dashing girl there called Queen Sylvia, and now this poor wretch who is in prison—it is a strange story. Bishop, do you think them as bad as they are painted?"

"My answer shall be in two parts," returned Reddington. "I admit that I was not fit, today, to use even my ordinary judgment, but, somehow, it was persistently dinned into my mind that the prisoner was not a bad man. Next, I have always asserted that we have no proof against the Hillmen. They have not been seen to steal or assault. Always, they hide from other men and are like the timid among animals. Is that the way of evil-doers?"

"But things have been stolen from this camp—money, gold[illegible] the like—and men have been [illegible] treated near the outskirts of our town."

"By the Hillmen?"

"By persons unknown. Yet, we must suspect either the Hillmen or——"

Leland stopped and the bishop finished the sentence.

"Or the people of the valley. Well, you know what report says about them. The charges are black but, like the matter of the Hillmen, proof is lacking. What I mean is, I have not the proof. But remember this: The people of the valley are many and they go abroad freely; the Hillmen are few, and they stick close to their dens on Mount Taber."

"Yes, as far as is known. I have never found a person in Shagfoot who admitted that he had seen one of the Hillmen until the prisoner of today was captured. Still, there are sneak-thieves in the world, and such men go and come secretly. Could not the hermit-band do this?"

"Maybe!" admitted Reddington.

"Don't think I want to condemn them, bishop. They appeal to me strongly. Their strange mode of life, their wild home, their common mystery, the rumor that there is a Queen Sylvia——"

Leland stopped and looked at his companion as if inviting him to say something. Getting no reply, he added:

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ou have been longer in Shagfoot I. Just what is all this talk about via? If the Hillmen are her- ts, sticking close to their dens, how known that there is a young woman, aforesaid, who is brilliant, dashing eautiful, and goes riding a black ke a shooting meteor?"

story dates back of my day here. that there was a miner who dis- from Shagfoot. After three returned, pale and thin of otherwise all right. He said met with an accident in the moun near the outer limits of the Hil retreat, and had been taken in by the and cared for most kindly and well. Further than [illegible] he would say almost nothing. Previously a great talker, he was remarkably secretive as to the dwellers on Mount Taber. It was he that told of Queen Sylvia, but he did it in one of those bursts of confidence that come to most men who are otherwise persons of few words."

"Is he here now?"

"No. He only stayed two days in camp, after which he left with the promise that he would return soon. He never came, and has never been heard from since."

"Tired of this remote region, I dare say?"

"Was he?" replied the bishop. "Or—this thought has come to me more than once—did he go on a mission for the Hillmen, anxious to express his gratitude to them in deeds, and meet with fresh disaster? He may have died."

Leland did not reply, and silence fell between the two men; but the ex-physician's interest in the hermits of the mountain was growing. Hedged in with mystery, and with a mystery colored by a dashing young woman, the strangeness of their lives appealed to him strongly. Ten minutes later, when he left the bishop's shanty, he directed his gaze to the summit of Mount Taber. Possibly he expected to see men there, possibly a damsel mounted on a fiery black horse, but the visible part of the range lay black, bleak and deserted.

Going on to his private shanty, he prepared and ate his supper, after which he smoked and meditated. A wanderer by choice, he had found singular conditions among men elsewhere and enjoyed them in a way. Now, it was the Hillmen who attracted him. He tried to arrive at an opinion concerning them. Were they victims of misfortune or mere outlaws?

He finally knocked the ashes from his pipe and summed up briefly:

"The only way to settle the question is to go among them, and they can't be got at. I will think no more about them!"

Despite this resolution, he fell asleep, that night, thinking about them, and afterward dreamed of them in weird, eccentric manner.

Awakening, anon, he rose for a drink of water, and then looked out of the Shagfoot lay flooded with moon- that was radically white and masterful. He saw the tiny structures where his fellow miners passed their nights, and where he supposed them to be sleeping then. Rough, brawny seekers of gold, they rested after the toil of the pick like so many bears in their dens.

Everybody seemed to be asleep, and Leland was turning away when something new attracted his attention. Away to the left side of the camp the deadness of the place was broken, and strangely broken, too. He saw a horse, and on its back was a woman. Quietly pursuing her way in the moonlight, she was a notable figure.

The ex-physician grew amazed. The women of Shagfoot counted eight in the total, and, though half of them were young, he had never known any of their number to ride at night. Besides this, the horses of the camp were limited to four, and whereas they were heavy of body and foot, this steed that went by night carried itself daintily and lightfootedly.

A suspicion fell upon Leland forcibly, and he whipped on the single garment he had discarded for the night and left his shanty. Quickly moving toward where he had seen the horse—which was no longer visible—he remembered that he was also going toward the building extemporized as a prison for Jabez Roebuck, and expected something to occur. Nor was he disappointed.

Presently he turned the corner of a building and—lo! the horse and its rider were again in sight, and but a few yards distant. The animal, black from hoof to ear-tip, was like a mark in ink on the moonlight. The rider—Leland took in much at one sweep. He could see that she was young, graceful and finely formed, and he could almost have affirmed that she was beautiful.

She had just made a halt by the building where Jabez Roebuck was confined, and theories came swiftly to the young man. This eye-dazzling rider was Queen Sylvia of the mountains, and she was there to rescue Roebuck. Leland was sure of it!

Seeing that her gaze was on him he stepped eagerly forward. From that point her face seemed cold and severe. She spoke, and her voice was imperious.

"Stop him!—strike him down!"

Then the world seemed to collapse and the stars of Heaven come near—and Leland lost all consciousness and lay prostrate and still.

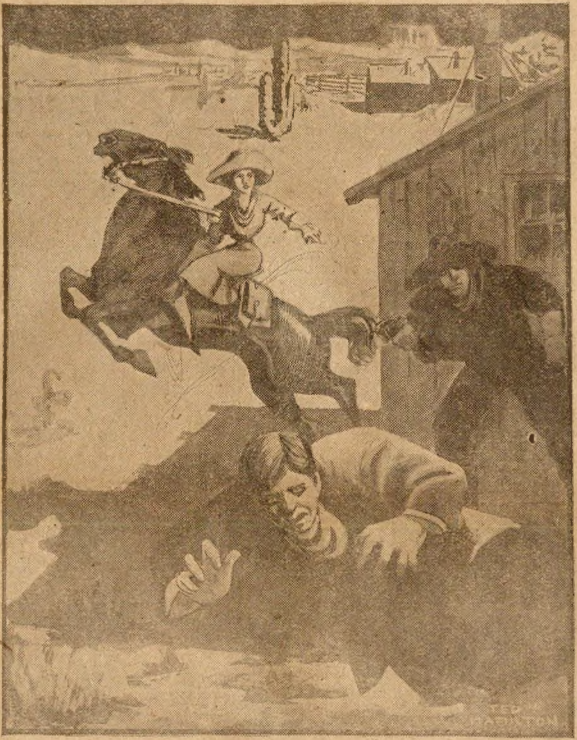
CHAPTER III.

SOMETHING IS FOUND.

When Leland Dale recovered his senses he was in his own shanty. The door was partially ajar and the room was well lighted by the moon, but there was silence within and without. The ex-physician quickly remembered his recent experiences and sprang to his feet. Hastening to the door he looked out.

The camp was still and peaceful. No human being was visible; but Leland was not disposed to trust everything to view from that point. Once more he made his way to the prison. This time he saw no young woman and no horse. Very cautiously he peered into the prison. Moonlight was there, as elsewhere, and he saw a single man, prostrate, and, he thought, bound. The light was strong enough to show him that the man was Daniel Flagg, a miner, and he remembered that Flagg had been stationed as a guard. He was the only tenant of the prison.

Leland made a circuit of the building and then strolled along the east side of camp. This done, he returned to his own shanty, lighted his pipe and sat down to think.



"Stop him! Strike him down"

Clearly, there had been a rescue and Jabez Roebuck was gone. In his place was the miner set to keep him in confinement. The rescue had not only been a success, but so well conducted that no alarm had resulted. Dale carried his hand to his head. There was a bunch outside and an ache within.

"I paid the penalty of meddling," he mused. "They gave me a tremendous whack on the head, but were kind enough, when they saw that I was helpless, to bring me here. Probably I was watched from the time I left my cabin, or they would not have known to what point to return me. That doesn't matter. The main thing is that the Hillmen have rescued Roebuck. The miner now in his place is alive, awake, and, judging by his appearance, uninjured. Query: Shall I give the alarm?"

Leland had settled this question long before, but he considered anew and conscientiously. He decided that he would hold his peace, and, unless somebody else already knew of his part in the affair, would say nothing about it.

"I'll forgive the blow I got," he decided, "and hold my tongue. I have been inclined to sympathize with the Hillmen on general principles, and here is a chance to show that I am true to my convictions. My share in the late skirmish is—the bunch on my head and a still tongue!"

He paused; then started and added:

"There is more—I have seen Queen Sylvia!"

Memory showed him the girl as he had seen her in the saddle, trim, graceful, picturesque, and, he thought, beautiful of face, but, now, there was no glow in his blood. He recalled more. It had never been his intention, when he discovered her, to sound an alarm; his sympathy had been aroused for the Hillmen, and he would have seen Jabez Roebuck taken away with perfect equanimity, but he had not been used as he aspired to use them. He remembered Queen Sylvia's imperious command, "Strike him down!" and the blow that had followed.

Now, too, he became aware that his head was aching severely. He bathed it in water and did what he could to alleviate his sufferings, but with indifferent results; and he finally lay down and, with his forehead on the hard pillow, tried to forget his pain. His will was strong but the flesh was weak, and it dominated the hour. Queen Sylvia and her friends appealed to him less than formerly. Romance did not hover around the brilliant rider, and charity walked apart from the whole band.

Those who ought to know said they were mere outlaws, and he knew what he owed to Sylvia. The memory of his admiration for her stood at zero.

In due time moonlight gave place to day and, presently, there was a stir outside. The miners were awake. Waiting for developments, he finally heard the alarm sounded, and then, going out, was a silent witness to what followed. Daniel Flagg, liberated, stood telling his story.

"There were seven or eight of them," he added, and with unblushing disregard for truth as to numbers. "Queer critters, too, girl an' all. Handled me as if I was made of chiny, and spoke pleasant as you please. Told me that if I was quiet they wouldn't harm me. Quiet? Why, say, a man don't warwhoop much with a gag in his mouth, does he? But they did handle me gentle, an' then left me bound an' gagged."

It was about all he could tell, and the whole matter amounted to nothing except that Jabez Roebuck was gone, and that the more hot-blooded miners grew additionally bitter against the Hillmen.

"Something must be done!" exclaimed Abner Crewe. "Them outlaws are carryin' it with a high hand. We fellers were fools, last night. Relied on the fact that the Hillmen stuck so close to their dens on the mountain and set only one man to guard the prisoner! That was brainy of us, wasn't it? Bah! Well, we will begin over. Somethin' must be done!"

"What can we do?" asked Colonel Bague.

Abner looked at the frowning side of Mount Taber and fell to stroking his beard thoughtfully.

"Well, I dunno!" was his answer; and he only echoed what was in the minds of others. Some of the most sanguine argued that those who had gone in pursuit could not fail to follow the trail of the horses, but the general opinion was that the Hillmen would still preserve their canyon-defended retreat from outsiders.

John Reddington, weak of body but clear of mind, touched Leland's arm and asked for chance to see him alone. They went to the bishop's shanty and he opened conversation at once.

"Doctor, will you keep a secret for me?" he asked.

"I think so—yes," replied Dale, after a keen glance at his pale-faced companion.

"Then never say anything relative to what I am about to tell. Late last night I ventured to take a drink of my demon. It went to my head, and I wandered out blindly, staggering. I fell and lost consciousness. When I recovered my few remaining wits, my head was in the arms of a woman and a sympathetic voice sounded in my ears. Two men were with her. She gave me cold water and also bathed my head; she spoke kind and compassionate words, and—I could almost affirm that she said a little prayer for me! After that she told the men to take me to my shanty, and they did so. She followed, leading a black horse. They left me here. I need scarcely ask if you know who she was."

"The outlaw girl?"

"Queen Sylvia!"

"It was a good turn."

"Yes, heaven bless her! Mark you, doctor, she came here to rescue one of her own sort from our men who had doomed him, and she paused long enough to help a poor fool up from the ditch he had fallen into. Shall we longer consider what opinion we should hold of the Hillmen? Shall we call these people outlaws and thieves? All used me nobly, led by the girl. Doctor, her heart is full of kindness!"

Leland unconsciously raised his hand and placed it on the bunch at the back of his head.

"Yes," he replied slowly.

"Her motto is, a helping hand instead of a blow!"

"Did she say so?" asked Dale grimly.

"No, but we are known by our works. She did that for a drunken vagabond like me. Even now I can feel the touch of her hand on my head."

The ex-physician again touched the hurt on his scalp.

"So can I!" he answered. "That is, I realize, I realize."

"Outlaw! Never! Clearly, her rule of life is, love your neighbor!"

"As you have said, we are known by our works!"

Reddington did not notice the non-committal nature of the reply. He rose and began pacing the narrow limits of the shanty. His pallor had given place to a flush, and his eyes were bright.

"This matter has gone home!" he exclaimed. "Doctor, you know how I feel toward you, and how much I appreciate your efforts to reform me, and I am sure you will not misjudge me when I say that no other deed of kindness has touched me as has that of last night. Queen Sylvia did more than to lift my head from the gutter—she raised my soul! This day she stands as my guardian angel! My manhood is awakened and my weak purposes are made strong. From this hour I will touch no more liquor!"

Leland had heard the same lips make the same vow before, but he felt no inclination to smile now. Instead, he looked kindly at his companion and, suddenly rising, took his hand.

"Here is strength to you, bishop!" he cried genially. "Stick to that resolution and you will make me happy. Exert your will-power—but I leave you to your better self."

"And to memory of Queen Sylvia!" added Reddington, deeply.

So be it. And—bishop, may I speak a word?"

"Go on, by all means."

"Pardon me, but you know I have been, yes, am, a doctor. Hear this warning! Nature in you has spoken to me, and its message is that you must drop your intemperate habits or—you will do something you will be sorry for. Your delicate organization, your over-abundance of nerves, your acute mental powers—these will not tolerate too much; and if a total collapse ever comes it is likely to lead you to do harm to somebody in the unconsciousness of temporary insanity, and that somebody might be your best friend!"

Reddington gazed at the speaker in startled surprise, his color fading away. For a moment he was speechless; then he exclaimed:

"Why, doctor, you are my best friend!"

"Yes, bishop."

"But what could I have against you? Not a matter of money, business, ambition nor creed. Nor yet a woman, for—I think only of Queen Sylvia, and you would not give her a thought."

"My dear fellow, motive would not be needed in a case like that I have mentioned. Madness creates its own motive; it needs only empty air to feed upon."

"I see! Well, Dale, here's my hand again. Watch me well! I am going to master my demon, once and for all. So I might go mad? If lack of fuel will worst the demon, he shall be beaten. I have heard your warning, and I've heard——"

He paused, walked across the room and then sat down and smiled gravely.

"Don't give more attention to what I have said about the mountain girl, doctor. I am grateful, and I really think it was a wonderful thing for her to pause at that crisis of her affairs and give heed to the wretch in the gutter, but I shall never see her again, of course. I am grateful, and I associate her with my reformation—she and you. Odd, isn't it, to see a hermit maiden, a reputable

(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

FAMOUS GHOST STORIES

THE SPECTER BRIDEGROOM

By WASHINGTON IRVING

ON THE summit of one of the heights of the Odenwald, a wild and romantic tract of Upper Germany that lies not far from the confluence of the Main and the Rhine, there stood, many, many years since, the Castle of the Baron Von Landshort. It is now quite fallen to decay, and almost buried among beech trees and dark firs; above which, however, its old watch-tower may still be seen struggling, like the former possessor I have mentioned, to carry a high head, and look down upon a neighboring country.

The Baron was a dry branch of the great family of Katzenellenbogen, and inherited the relics of the property and all the pride of his ancestors. Though the warlike disposition of his predecessors had much impaired the family possessions, yet the Baron still endeavored to keep up some show of former state. The times were peaceable, and the German nobles, in general, had abandoned their inconvenient old castles, perched like eagles' nests among the mountains, and had built more convenient residences in the valleys; still the Baron remained proudly drawn up in his little fortress, cherishing with hereditary inveteracy all the old family feuds; so that he was on ill terms with some of his nearest neighbors, on account of disputes that had happened between their great-great-grandfathers.

The Baron had but one child, a daughter; but Nature, when she grants but one child, always compensates by making it a prodigy; and so it was with the daughter of the Baron. All the nurses, gossips, and country cousins, assured her father that she had not her equal for beauty in all Germany; and who should know better than they? She had, moreover, been brought up with great care, under the superintendence of two maiden aunts, who had spent some years of their early life at one of the little German courts, and were skilled in all the branches of knowledge necessary to the education of a fine lady. Under their instructions, she became a miracle of accomplishments. By the time she was 18 she could embroider to admiration, and had worked whole histories of the saints in tapestry with such strength of expression in their countenances that they looked like so many souls in purgatory. She could read without great difficulty, and had spelled her way through several church legends, and almost all the chivalric wonders of the Heldenbuch. She had even made considerable proficiency in writing, could sign her own name without missing a letter, and so legibly that her aunts could read it without spectacles. She excelled in making little good-for-nothing lady-like knickknacks of all kinds; was versed in the most abstruse dancing of the day; played a number of airs on the harp and guitar; and knew all the tender ballads of the Minne-lieders by heart.

Her aunts, too, having been great flirts and coquettes in their younger days, were admirably calculated to be vigilant guardians and strict censors of the conduct of their niece; for there is no duenna so rigidly prudent, and inexorably decorous, as a superannuated coquette. She was rarely suffered out of their sight; never went beyond the domains of the castle, unless well attended, or, rather, well watched; had continual lectures read to her about strict decorum and implicit obedience; and, as to the men—pah! she was taught to hold them at such distance and distrust that, unless properly authorized, she would not have cast a glance upon the handsomest cavalier in the world—no, not if he were even dying at her feet.

The good effects of this system were wonderfully apparent. The young lady was a pattern of docility and correctness. While others were wasting their sweetness in the glare of the world, and liable to be plucked and thrown aside by every hand, she was coyly blooming into fresh and lovely womanhood under the protection of those immaculate spinsters, like a rose-bud blushing forth among guardian thorns. Her aunts looked upon her with pride and exultation, and vaunted that though all the other young ladies in the world might go astray, yet, thank Heaven, nothing of the kind could happen to the heiress of Katzenellenbogen.

But however scantily the Baron Von Landshort might be provided with children, his household was by no means a small one, for Providence had enriched him with abundance of poor relations. They, one and all, possessed the affectionate disposition common to humble relatives; were wonderfully attached to the Baron, and took every possible occasion to come in swarms and enliven the castle. All family festivals were commemorated by these good people at the Baron's expense; and when they were filled with good cheer, they would declare that there was nothing on earth so delightful as these family meetings, these jubilees of the heart.

The Baron, though a small man, had a large soul, and it swelled with satisfaction at the consciousness of being the greatest man in the little world about him. He loved to tell long stories about the stark old warriors whose portraits looked grimly down from the walls around, and he found no listeners equal to those who fed at his expense. He was much given to the marvelous, and a firm believer in all those supernatural tales with which every mountain and valley in Germany abounds. The faith of his guests even exceeded his own; they listened to every tale of wonder with open eyes and mouth, and never failed to be astonished, even though repeated for the hundredth time. Thus lived the Baron Von Landshort, the oracle of his table, the absolute monarch of his little territory, and happy, above all things, in the persuasion that he was the wisest man of the age.

At the time of which my story treats there was a great family gathering at the castle, on an affair of the utmost importance; it was to receive the destined bridegroom of the Baron's daughter. A negotiation had been carried on between the father and an old nobleman at Bavaria, to unite the dignity of their houses by the marriage of their children. The preliminaries had been conducted with proper punctilio. The young people were betrothed without seeing each other, and the time was appointed for the marriage ceremony. The young Count Von Altenburg had been recalled from the army for the purpose, and was actually on his way to the Baron's to receive his bride. Missives had even been received from him, from Wurtzburg, where he was accidentally detained, mentioning the day and hour when he might be expected to arrive.

The castle was in a tumult of preparation to give him a suitable welcome. The fair bride had been decked out with uncommon care. The two aunts had superintended her toilet, and quarreled the whole morning about every article of her dress. The young lady had taken advantage of their contest to follow the bent of her own taste; and fortunately it was a good one. She looked as lovely as youthful bridegroom could desire; and the flutter of expectation heightened the luster of her charms.

The suffusion that mantled her face and neck, the gentle heaving of the bosom, the eye now and then lost in reverie, all betrayed the soft tumult that was going on in her little heart. The aunts were continually hovering around her; for maiden aunts are apt to take great interest in affairs of this nature; they were giving her a world of staid counsel how to deport herself, what to say, and in what manner to receive the expected lover.

The Baron was no less busied in preparations. He had, in truth, nothing exactly to do; but he was naturally a fuming, bustling little man, and could not remain passive when all the world was in a hurry. He worried from top to bottom of the castle, with an air of infinite anxiety; he continually called the servants from their work to exhort them to be diligent, and buzzed about every hall and chamber, as idly, restless, and importunate as a bluebottle fly of a warm summer's day.

In the meantime, the fatted calf had been killed; the forests had rung with the clamor of the huntsmen; the kitchen was crowded with good cheer; the cellars had yielded up whole oceans of Rhein-wein and Ferne-wein, and even the great Heidelberg Tun had been laid under contribution. Everything was ready to receive the distinguished guest with Saus und Braus in the true spirit of German hospitality—but the guest delayed to make his appearance. Hour rolled after hour. The sun that had poured his downward rays upon the rich forests of the Odenwald, now just gleamed along the summits of the mountains. The Baron mounted the highest tower, and strained his eyes in hopes of catching a distant sight of the Count and his attendants. Once he thought he beheld them; the sound of horns came floating from the valley, prolonged by the mountain echoes; a number of horsemen were seen far below, slowly advancing along the road; but when they had nearly reached the foot of the mountain they suddenly struck off in a different direction. The last ray of sunshine departed—the boats began to flit by in the twilight—the road grew dimmer and dimmer to the view; and nothing appeared stirring in it but now and then a peasant lagging homeward from his labor.

While the old castle of Landshort was in this state of perplexity, a very interesting scene was transacting in a different part of the Odenwald.

The young Count Von Altenburg was tranquilly pursuing his route in that sober jog-trot way in which a man travels toward matrimony when his friends have taken all the trouble and uncertainty of courtship off his hands, and a bride is waiting for him, as certainly as a dinner, at the end of his journey. He had encountered at Wurtzburg a youthful companion in arms, with whom he had seen some service on the frontiers; Herman Von Starkenfaust, one of the stoutest hands and worthiest hearts of German chivalry, who was now returning from the army. His father's castle was not far distant from the old fortress of Landshort, although a hereditary feud rendered the families hostile and strangers to each other.

In the warm-hearted moment of recognition, the young friends related all their past adventures and fortunes, and the Count gave the whole history of his intended nuptials with a young lady whom he had never seen, but of whose charms he had received the most enrapturing descriptions.

As the route of the friends lay in the same direction, they agreed to perform the rest of their journey together; and, that they might do it more leisurely, set off from Wurtzburg at an early hour, the Count having given directions for his retinue to follow and overtake him.

They beguiled their wayfaring with recollections of their military scenes and adventures; but the Count was apt to be a little tedious, now and then, about the reputed charms of his bride, and the felicity that awaited him.

In this way they had entered among the mountains of the Odenwald, and were traversing one of its most lonely and thickly wooded passes. It is well known that the forests of Germany have always been as much infested with robbers as its castles by spectres; and, at this time, the former were particularly numerous, from the hordes of disbanded soldiers wandering about the country. It will not appear extraordinary, therefore, that the cavaliers were attacked by a gang of these stragglers in the midst of the forest. They defended themselves with bravery, but were nearly overpowered when the Count's retinue arrived to their assistance. At sight of them the robbers fled, but not until the Count had received a mortal wound. He was slowly and carefully conveyed back to the city of Wurtzburg, and a friar summoned from a neighboring convent, who was famous for his skill in administering to both soul and body. But half of his skill was superfluous; the moments of the unfortunate Count were numbered.

With his dying breath he entreated his friend to repair instantly to the castle of Landshort, and explain the fatal cause of his not keeping his appointment with his bride. Though not the most ardent of lovers, he was one of the most punctilious of men, and appeared earnestly solicitous that this mission should be speedily and courteously executed. "Unless this is done," he said, "I shall not sleep quietly in my grave!" He repeated these words with peculiar solemnity. A request, at a moment so impressive, admitted no hesitation. Starkenfaust endeavored to soothe him to calmness; promised faithfully to execute his wish, and gave him his hand in solemn pledge. The dying man pressed it in acknowledgment, but soon lapsed into delirium—raved about his bride—his engagement—his plighted word; ordered his horse, that he might ride to the castle of Landshort, and expired in the fancied act of vaulting into the saddle.

Starkenfaust bestowed a sigh and a soldier's tear on the untimely fate of his comrade; and then pondered on the awkward mission he had undertaken. His heart was heavy, and his head perplexed; for he was to present himself an unbidden guest among hostile people, and to damp their festivity with tidings fatal to their hopes. Still there were certain whisperings of curiosity in his bosom to see this far-famed beauty of Katzenellenbogen so cautiously shut up from the world; for he was a passionate admirer of the sex, and there was a dash of eccentricity and enterprise in his character that made him fond of all singular adventure.

Previous to his departure, he made all due arrangements with the holy fraternity of the convent for the funeral solemnities of his friend, who was to be buried in the cathedral of Wutzburg, near some of his illustrious relatives; and the mourning retinue of the Count took charge of his remains.

It is now high time that we should return to the ancient family of Katzenellenbogen, who were impatient for their guest, and still more for their dinner; and to the worthy little Baron, whom we left airing himself on the watch-tower.

Night closed in, but still no guest arrived. The Baron descended from the tower in despair. The banquet, which had been delayed from hour to hour, could no longer be postponed. The meats were already overdue, the cook in an agony, and the whole household had the look of a garrison that had been reduced by famine. The Baron was obliged reluctantly to give orders for the feast

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without the presence of the guest. All were seated at table, and just on the point of commencing, when the sound of a horn from without the gate gave notice of the approach of a stranger. Another long blast filled the old courts of the castle with its echoes, and was answered by the warder from the walls. The Baron hastened to receive his future son-in-law.

The drawbridge had been let down, and the stranger was before the gate. He was a tall gallant cavalier, mounted on a black steed. His countenance was pale, but he had a beaming, romantic eye, and an air of stately melancholy. The Baron was a little mortified that he should have come in this simple, solitary style. His dignity for a moment was ruffled, and he felt disposed to consider it a want of proper respect for the important occasion, and the important family with which he was to be connected. He pacified himself, however, with the conclusion that it must have been youthful impatience which had induced him thus to spur on sooner than his attendants.

"I am sorry," said the stranger, "to break in upon you thus unseasonably—"

Here the Baron interrupted him with a world of compliments and greetings; for, to tell the truth, he prided himself upon his courtesy and his eloquence. The stranger attempted, once or twice, to stem the torrent of words, but in vain; so he bowed his head and suffered it to flow on. By the time the Baron had come to a pause they had reached the inner court of the castle; and the stranger was again about to speak, when he was once more interrupted by the appearance of the female part of the family, leading forth the shrinking and blushing bride. He gazed on her for a moment as one entranced; it seemed as if his whole soul beamed forth in the gaze, and rested upon that lovely form. One of the maiden aunts whispered something in her ear; she made an effort to speak; her moist blue eye was timidly raised, gave a shy glance of inquiry on the stranger, and was cast again to the ground. The words died away; but there was a sweet smile playing about her lips, and a soft dimpling of the cheek, that showed her glance had not been unsatisfactory. It was impossible for a girl of the fond age of 18, highly predisposed for love and matrimony, not to be pleased with so gallant a cavalier.

The late hour at which the guest had arrived left no time for parley. The Baron was peremptory, and deferred all particular conversation until the morning, and led the way to the untasted banquet.

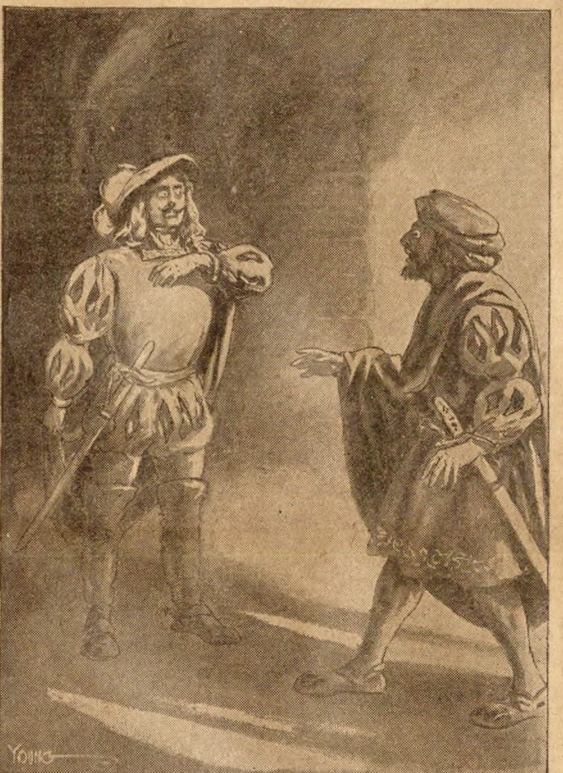
It was served up in the great hall of the castle. Around the walls hung the [illegible]d-favored portraits of the heroes of [illegible] Katzenellenbogen, and the trophies which they had gained in the field and in the chase. Hacked corselets, splintered jousting spears, and tattered banners, were mingled with the spoils of sylvan warfare; the jaws of the wolf, and the tusks of the boar, grinned horribly among crossbows and battle-axes, and a huge pair of antlers branched immediately over the head of the youthful bridegroom.

The cavalier took but little notice of the company or the entertainment. He scarcely tasted the banquet, but seemed absorbed in admiration of his bride. He conversed in a low tone, that could not be overheard—for the language of love is never loud; but where is the female ear so dull that it can not catch the softest whisper of the lover? There was a mingled tenderness and gravity in his manner that appeared to have a powerful effect upon the young lady. Her color came and went, as she listened with deep attention. Now and then she made some blushing reply, and when his eye was turned away she would steal a sidelong glance at his romantic countenance, and heave a gentle sigh of tender happiness. It was evident that the young couple were completely enamored. The aunts, who were deeply versed in the mysteries of the heart, declared that they had fallen in love with each other at first sight.

The feast went on merrily, or at least noisily, for the guests were all blessed with those keen appetites that attend upon light purses and mountain air. The Baron told his best and longest stories, and never had he told them so well, or with such great effect. If there was anything marvelous, his auditors were lost in astonishment; and if anything facetious, they were sure to laugh exactly in the right place. The Baron, it is true, like most great men, was too dignified to utter any joke but a dull one; it was always enforced, however, by a bumper of excellent Hoch-heimer; and even a dull joke, at one's own table, served up with jolly old wine, is irresistible. Many good things were said by poorer and keener wits that would not bear repeating, except on similar occasions; many sly speeches whispered in ladies' ears that almost convulsed them with suppressed laughter; and a song or two roared out by a poor, but merry and broad-faced cousin of the Baron, that absolutely made the maiden aunts hold up their fans.

Amid all this revelry, the stranger-guest maintained a most singular and unseasonable gravity. His countenance assumed a deeper cast of dejection as the evening advanced, and, strange as it may appear, even the Baron's jokes seemed only to render him the more melancholy. At times he was lost in thought, and at times there was a perturbed and restless wandering of the eye that bespoke a mind but ill at ease. His conversation with the bride became more and more earnest and mysterious. Lowering clouds began to steal over the fair serenity of her brow, and tremors to run through her tender frame.

All this could not escape the notice of the company. Their gaiety was chilled by the unaccountable gloom of the bridegroom; their spirits were infected; whispers and glances were interchanged, accompanied by shrugs and dubious shakes of the head. The song and the laugh grew less and less frequent; there were dreary pauses in the conversation, which were at length succeeded by wild tales, and supernatural legends. One dismal story produced another still more dismal, and the Baron nearly frightened some of the ladies into hysterics with the history of the goblin horseman that carried away the fair Leonora—a dreadful, but true story, which has since been put into excellent verse, and is read and believed by all the world.



"The worms expect me!"

The bridegroom listened to this tale with profound attention. He kept his eyes steadily fixed on the Baron, and, as the story grew to a close, began gradually to rise from his seat, growing taller and taller, until, in the Baron's eye, he seemed almost to tower into a giant. The moment the tale was finished, he heaved a deep sigh, and took a solemn farewell of the company. They were all amazement. The Baron was perfectly thunderstruck.

"What! going to leave the castle at midnight? Why, everything was prepared for his reception; a chamber was ready for him if he wished to retire."

The stranger shook his head mournfully and mysteriously: "I must lay my head in a different chamber tonight."

There was something in this reply, and the tone in which it was uttered, that made the Baron's heart misgive him; but he rallied his forces, and repeated his hospitable entreaties. The stranger shook his head silently, but positively, at every offer; and, waving his farewell to the company, stalked slowly out of the hall. The maiden aunts were absolutely petrified—the bride hung her head, and a tear stole to her eye.

The Baron followed the stranger to the great court of the castle, where the black charger stood pawing the earth and snorting with impatience. When they had reached the portal, whose deep archway was dimly lighted by a cresset, the stranger paused, and addressed the Baron in a hollow tone of voice, which the vaulted roof rendered still more sepulchral. "Now we are alone," said he, "I will impart to you the reason of my going. I have a solemn, an indispensable engagement——"

"Why," said the Baron, "can not you send some one in your place?"

"It admits of no substitute—I must attend it in person—I must away to Wurtzburg cathedral——"

"Ay," said the Baron, plucking up spirit, "but not until tomorrow—tomorrow you shall take your bride there."

"No! no!" replied the stranger, with tenfold solemnity, "my engagement is with no bride—the worms! the worms expect me! I am a dead man—I have been slain by robbers—my body lies at Wurtzburg—at midnight I am to be buried—the grave is waiting for me—I must keep my appointment!"

He sprang on his black charger, dashed over the drawbridge, and the clattering of his horse's hoofs was lost in the whistling of the night-blast.

The Baron returned to the hall in the utmost consternation, and related what had passed. Two ladies fainted outright; others sickened at the idea of having banqueted with a specter. It was the opinion of some that this might be the wild huntsman famous in German legend. Some talked of mountain sprites, of wood-demons, and of other supernatural beings, with which the good people of Germany have been so grievously harassed since time immemorial. One of the poor relations ventured to suggest that it might be some sportive evasion of the young cavalier, and that the very gloominess of the caprice seemed to accord with so melancholy a personage. This, however, drew on him the indignation of the whole company, and especially of the Baron, who looked upon him as little better than an infidel; so that he was fain to abjure his hearsy as speedily as possible, and come into the faith of the true believers.

But, whatever may have been the doubts entertained, they were completely put to an end by the arrival, next day, of regular missives confirming the intelligence of the young Count's murder, and his interment in Wurtzburg cathedral.

The dismay at the castle may well be imagined. The Baron shut himself up in his chamber. The guests who had come to rejoice with him could not think of abandoning him in his distress. They wandered about the courts, or collected in groups in the hall, shaking their heads and shrugging their shoulders at the troubles of so good a man; and sat longer than ever at table, and ate and drank more stoutly than ever, by way of keeping up their spirits. But the situation of the widowed bride was the most pitiable. To have lost a husband before she had even embraced him—and such a husband! if the specter could be so gracious

(Continued on page twenty-one.)

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CONQUEST OF THE MOON;

Or, The Airship's Cargo of Diamonds

By GEORGE T. HARGREAVES.

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CHAPTER VI.

A REFUSAL REPEATED.

RAYMOND cast a quick glance at his employer's sphinx-like face. Fifteen years of close association with the financier had taught the secretary that secrecy was the keynote in all his mammoth deals. John Dorgan always kept his own counsel until he was thoroughly ready to strike. But this request about the missing diamond was so unusual that he could not entirely surpress the suspicion that there was some mystery here. To—be—sure, he realized that it would be regarded as a reflection upon the Dorgan house if it became known to the public that its supposedly theft-and-fire-proof vault had been invaded and a gem so valuable as the huge stone he had seen on the desk of his boss carried away. But wasn't it strange that even the private detectives whom the firm continuously employed were not to be called in on the disappearance?

Raymond's conjectures ceased suddenly as he began to watch the capitalist's movements. Dorgan put his hand into the empty Box D and ran it carefully along its bottom. The rich man's mouth was twitching when he drew his fingers forth, as empty as when he had inserted them. He closed the box, turned the key and threw the door of his safe shut. It locked automatically.

"Remember, Raymond, no word of this till I say so," he repeated and strode back to his room.

"Straus," he said abruptly, "the diamond I intended to show you has apparently been misplaced. I'll call you in again when I locate it. In the meantime my injunction of secrecy holds good. Good morning."

"I hope you haven't lost——" the expert began solicitously.

"Good morning, I said," repeated the magnate brusquely as he turned anew to the papers on his desk.

Straus, mystified and silenced, retired in haste.

When the door closed behind him, John Dorgan looked up. A mingled sneer and smile crept from his mouth corner to his eyes, screened by near-closed lids. But his habitually somber expression wrinkled its way back quickly as a slight tap sounded on the heavy door panel. He waited until it was repeated before he raised his voice to call "come."

The door flew briskly open and a dainty figure in cerise stepped lightly into the room.

"Good morning, guardian," she exclaimed as she flung herself into a chair close to Dorgan's desk and smiled gaily at him.

The banker's face widened amiably.

"Ah, Virginia! This is rather early for you," he said, laying aside his work.

"Oh, I'm an early bird since I began to learn to fly. I rise with the sun now," she laughed, her voice bubbling with joy.

"Fly? What do you mean?" Dorgan's stern face grew puzzled.

"Why, you dear old fogy, don't you read the papers? Didn't you see my prettiest picture in print last week as the leading society aviator?" she inquired demurely, glancing into the magnate's face with a mischievous twinkle.

"No, I didn't," he responded gravely, "and I hope it isn't so. You drive those autos of yours recklessly enough on earth without risking your neck in the air."

"Oh, but I have the most competent instructor, guardy," the girl replied assuringly. "He thinks too much of me to let me tumble."

"Who is that?" Dorgan inquired quickly.

"Who would it be but Mr. Lester Babcock?" she retorted, her voice buoyant with pride.

"Babcock, eh? Quite a likely chap, I hear. Have you known him long?" The banker's tone was casual but out of his screened lids he narrowly observed the dainty visitor.

"Long? Oh, yes; more than a year now, I think."

"And you've never told me of him before. I thought that as your trustee I knew all your friends."

"Well," Miss Larned began hesitantly, "you see, guardy, I was somewhat diffident about mentioning him to you. You know you have been so peculiar about my men friends."

"But you told me about all the rest. Why was this Mr. Babcock so carefully secluded?"

Virginia flushed slightly. Dorgan noted the pink mounting to her cheeks and also the pause that followed his question.

"Well, guardy," she at length began archly, "I didn't want you to be jealous——"

Dorgan rose uneasily, looked down at the embarrassed girl and broke in coldly:

"I see; you like this man Babcock pretty well, don't you?"

"Indeed, I do," she said enthusiastically, the long, drooping white plumes in her hat waving a confirmation.

"Better than the—others?"

"Yes, indeed. You'll like him, too, guardy. He's so brave, daring and clever and yet so gentle."

"You like him even better than—me?" Dorgan prodded on coldly.

"Now, guardy," she raised her white gloved hand and shook a finger warningly at him, "I thought we'd agreed never to go back to that subject in this way. I thought my refusal was to stand until I changed my mind and said so voluntarily. I have told you, oh, so many times that I do not love you, cannot marry you. Why do you keep bringing up a subject so distressing?"

John Dorgan's eyes came as close to revealing a hurt as it was possible for them—so long and ably schooled in the art of repression. He took a step toward the girl and said quite slowly and steadily:

"Virginia, forgive me. But the sight of you quite overpowers my discretion. I'm old—old enough to be your father—but I love you with all the ardor of a man thirty years my junior. I know you call it impossible and rebuff my suit, but my stubborn will refuses to surrender. All my life I've been accustomed to having my own way—after fighting for it. In fact, I've gloried in fighting for it. I have conquered men and institutions that were backed by the most tremendous influences and exhaustless funds. It seems so strange that I cannot win you—only a little woman."

Her eyes drooped to her hands that lay tensely clasped in her lap. When she looked up a moment later they were very soft and kind.

"Guardy," she began quite tenderly, "you were papa's closest friend. I know he believed in you thoroughly, because when he came to die he intrusted me to your care and left the entire estate to your trusteeship. You have made my interests your own, I know, because only last month your annual—oh, what do you call it?"

"Appraisal?"

"Yes, appraisal showed me the ten millions papa bequeathed me had grown to twelve——"

"And more," interrupted the man.

"I respect you," she went on without noticing the interruption with all that it implied in worldly wealth, "but I cannot love you. You are more than fifty. I'm only twenty-five. If I am to love any one, it is only natural that he should be a man of approximately my own age, now isn't it?"

"Then you don't love any one yet?" he queried, the faintest trace of hope in his deliberate words.

Again her eyes drooped. In the silence Dorgan's face grew very hard. He stepped still nearer and laid his hand sternly upon her shoulder.

"You do love some one then?" he said slowly.

She quivered under his touch, then looked up quite bravely.

"Yes, I do," she declared, a tremor in her voice. "Why should I hide it?" she went on as if to herself.

"Who?" and the gaunt hand gripped the woman's shoulder still more closely.

"You know," she murmured softly.

"The flying man?" he shot out.

"Yes," she lifted her head proudly.

His hand dropped from her shoulder and he retreated a step, grasping the edge of his desk.

"I suppose you know," he said coldly, "that according to your father's will, my consent is necessary to your marriage if you wish to retain the larger part of your estate?"

"Your consent is necessary, yes," she answered, looking him quite steadily in the eye, "but only until I am thirty. When I reach that age your entire trusteeship expires and I am wholly my own mistress. But," and she rose quite defiantly, "I don't care for the money. When I marry, I'll marry for love. Money—either my own or my husband's—will be no consideration."

"Steady there," Dorgan said, a little less sternly. "You have lived too long in absolute luxury to be able to get along without money." He raised his finger as she made to interrupt. Then he continued quite ingratiatingly, "Virginia, I am one of the richest men in the country—maybe the richest. Think what you would be if you were the mistress of all my millions."

"I'll not think of it—I'll not think of it!" she flared suddenly, her cheeks draining white. "I'm heartily sick of it all. Money buys me no happiness. All my life I've had everything that I craved—a magnificent home, stunning gowns, hosts of friends, social honors, gorgeous equipages. I've gone hither and yon, a belle if ever society had one, courted by scores, groveled over by throngs but I've never been happy—until recently."

"Until recently, eh?" he repeated, almost sullenly. "Until you met this man Babcock, eh?"

"Yes," she replied, lifting her head joyously, "he has made me what my millions—or yours either—couldn't."

Dorgan rattled the papers on his desk aimlessly.

"Well, girl," he said finally, "you're taking some of my valuable time. What brings you here at this early hour?"

"Business," she replied firmly. "I want to consult with you as to the disposition of my estate in the event of my death."

Dorgan raised his eyes sharply to her earnest face.

"Death? What do you mean?"

"Guardy," she said quite demure yet serious, "I am going on a long journey and I want to arrange things in the event that I do not return."

"A long journey? Where?" Dorgan asked, annoyed.

"To the moon," she answered with heaving bosom.

CHAPTER VII.

AN OLD MAN'S PROPOSAL.

Dorgan laughed quite mirthfully. That was about as near as he ever came to evidencing any real pleasure. His mind for thirty years had occupied itself with only serious affairs. Let it be the crushing of some business rival or the execution of some gigantic industrial or financial proposal and Dorgan worked over it with as much ardor and energy as if his life depended upon the successful issue. Under pressure such as this, his eyes flashed and his face twitched. Maybe out of occupations such as these he got as much pleasure as we less strenuous souls extract from an occasional hearty laugh. But his stern, hard face and his steady, unyielding eyes and his care-lined forehead certainly didn't indicate it.

For the truth might as well be fully known now—John Dorgan got practically his sole satisfaction out of life from the acquisition of money. Could his active brain and his slow-beating heart have spoken, it is certain they would have known well only one word and that word "More."

Dorgan had undergone one great change in his life. That was when, as a young man he sought the hand of the woman whom his partner, Seymoure Larned fairly won away from him. From gayety he suddenly became somber, from a roysterer a serious, stern man of business, who held neither mercy or consideration. He admired art greatly, was a large contributor to higher education and made his rambling old home a very Eldorado of treasures. But he evaded the women. He came to abhor society, although his birthright gave him entrance to its most exclusive circles. He was almost a recluse until Virginia Larned was born—at the cost of her mother's life. Then in that swaddling infant's society he seemed to take a silent satisfaction. As the babe grew to girlhood the millionaire's delight in her society grew likewise, and when she had developed into a rare young womanhood, with many of the graces of her mother and most of her remarkable beauty, he had become a devoted but stern and silent admirer.

Only Virginia Larned knew of the real state of John Dorgan's feelings toward her, and as, under the tutelege of her aunt and companion, Miss Travers, she learned of his early infatuation for her mother, she came to regard him quite tenderly. In many a dreamy mood, she found it easy to imagine that the affection he had once entertained for her mother had been transferred, by some subtle process, to herself. Had the circumstances of his suit been otherwise, she would have rebuffed him sharply. But through the strange sentiment with which she invested his attentions, she felt impelled to treat him always kindly.

"Virginia, don't be foolish now," the man began when his harsh laugh had passed. "Your mother always had the soundest sense I ever knew in a woman. You surely must have inherited some of it."

"I was never more serious in my life—nor more determined," she answered steadily. "I settled it all with Les—with Mr. Babcock yesterday. I've slept over it and this morning I am as resolved as ever. So please don't try to argue me out of it. It would be a waste of time and we both should lose our patience and our tempers."

"But, my dear girl, you'll take a word

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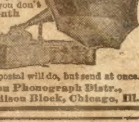

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of advice, at least," said the magnate slowly.

"Well, I'll listen, Guardy. What is it?" she smiled.

"Don't let the glamor of a daring upstart blind you to the fact that ten or twelve million dollars coupled with a pretty bride is quite an attractive stake—sufficient to most men without the requisite of a happy marriage, love."

Virginia looked up keenly while the anger in her eyes grew until they fairly blazed.

"I'll not hear a word against him—not a word. I know him," she exclaimed impulsively with a dangerous expression creeping into her limpid eyes. She rose quickly as a tap sounded on the door.

Raymond appeared in response to Dorgan's summons, "Come."

"Mr. Babcock is waiting," the secretary announced.

The magnate glanced inscrutably at the girl while a faint flush mounted her cheeks.

"Show him in," came the order.

Babcock, summoned, paused on the threshold as he beheld Virginia and bowed low. Then he advanced quickly, took the hand she extended and shook it cordially.

"You know each other, I see," commented Dorgan as the aviator, in turn, saluted him formally.

There was the hint of embarrassment in the glance the pair exchanged as the flying-man responded heartily:

"I have the honor, sir, to know Miss Larned very well."

"Yes, Guardy," coincided Virginia with a whimsical smile," we two know each other very well—as you know," she ended quite authoritatively.

"You appear to have won your way to the top in the dangerous field of activity you have chosen," volunteered Dorgan as he gave the aviator a hasty but keen inspection.

"This is the worst of my troubles," replied Babcock lightly. "The public tries to make a fool of me with its adulation when all I ask is to be let entirely alone to work out my progress."

"Well, I shan't bother you then with a lot of praise upon your achievements," said Dorgan in a business-like tone as he once more turned to his desk.

"Well, I hear a hint of business in Guardy's words," smiled Virginia graciously. "That means my conge. Good morning, gentlemen," and she turned to the door.

"If you are returning to the 'Nookery' this morning," said Babcock, "I would be glad to take you home in the 'Rapier! I came over from Hempstead in it and left it at the landing stage in Central Park. I hope to be able to start back in an hour," concluded the aviator, glancing inquiringly at Dorgan.

The latter following Virginia to the door, saw the look and answered:

"Oh, I will not keep you long." Then as the girl swept gracefully across the threshold the banker whispered in her ear: "Remember, my dear, my consent is necessary to your marriage and I do not purpose allowing you to wed this—daredevil."

CHAPTER VIII.

BABCOCK'S SECRETS.

Virginia did not answer with her lips, but the flash of her eyes and the poise of her head spoke unutterable defiance as she hurried away.

Dorgan, closing the door, wasted no time in getting down to business with his caller.

"Professor Jekyll tells me," he began, "that you regard his proposal of a flight to the moon in search of some supposed treasure as quite feasible. Since he has tried to enlist my financial participation in the project, I deemed it wise to have your views at first hand."

"Professor Jekyll is thoroughly dependable," was the response. "He certainly is not visionary enough to risk his life in an enterprise that promises even such tremendous rewards as this one were he not reasonably and scientifically certain of its successful outcome."

"Oh, I do not doubt him in that way," Dorgan made haste to say. "But I deemed it only wise before I proceeded further to know just how you proposed to make such a revolutionary journey and to hear your idea of the probability of a return in safety."

"I can only say that I am as positive of making the trip to the moon and return as safely as I made this last flight across the continent to San Francisco without a single stop, balk or accident of any kind," Babcock returned decidedly.

"But it will take you fully three months to make the trip there and return—let alone the time you may spend on the moon. Your supplies and equipment would more than overload any airship yet operated."

"My dear sir," smiled the aviator, "we have had to think out more serious problems than a food supply—and we have mastered them all, I believe."

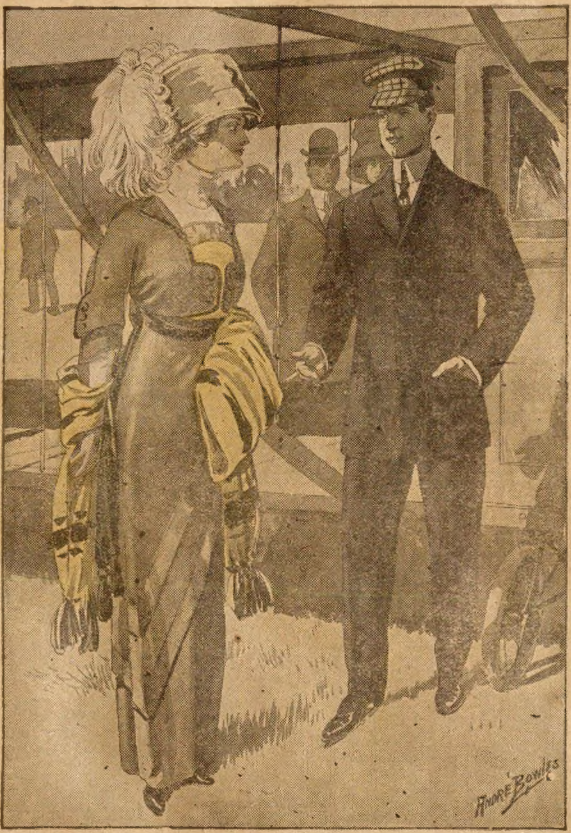
"Tell me about them."

Babcock drew from an inner pocket the blue-print plans he and Professor Jekyll had gone over so thoroughly on the preceding afternoon, and spread them carefully on the desk before the capitalist. Then with a long, tapering forefinger he deftly began his explanation.

"We have here," he said, "the plan for a perfectly feasible aeroplane whose airtight compartment for living purposes measures fifty feet long by twenty wide. This shell is to be aluminum braced by supports of the finest steel. The machine is to be equipped with duplicate sets of planes, one to replace the other in ease of accident. We have here our equipment of twin driving wheels," Babcock pointed out, "just like the twin screws on the ocean greyhounds—so that if one gets out of order or needs a rest, the other can be instantly set to work.

"Here," and the aviator directed Dorgan's attention to a box-like compartment projected onto the front of what he called the aeroplane coach, "is held the secret that we flying men have sought after for years—that of automatic balance. It is here fully shown and its efficiency proved beyond a doubt."

"And you think this twenty by fifty foot shell will hold all you need to carry with you—food, instruments, sleeping accommodations, arms, fuel, and all the other things you consider necessary?" the magnate inquired.



"You see, I'm on time."

"Ample, yes," replied Babcock lightly. "We have arranged the interior much like the cabin of a ship. Along the two sides are six staterooms, each with two berths and a large outlook through plate glass windows sunk in the aluminum case. Between the tier of staterooms we have first an observation room whose sides and front are wholly of glass. This projection in the top is to hold the telescope which Professor Jekyll intends to take.

"Back of the observation room is the lounging room. Back of that the work room and machinery. Then come the diningroom with the kitchen on one side and the bath on the other. Beneath them is the storage apartment where all our supplies will be carried. If the money is forthcoming." The aviator paused here as if to give the listener an opportunity to express his purpose, but the pause was without use from secretive John Dorgan. "No millionaire's ocean-going yacht will be more commodious or more comfortable—or, for that matter, more safe."

"But you seem to have missed one point," interjected Dorgan, glancing up unsmilingly. "A ship of the size you indicate here would hardly hold sufficient fuel to generate the power you will need on such a long journey."

Babcock cast a quick glance about the room as if to assure himself that he was not overheard before he answered. Satisfied that the two were alone, he went on:

"That, sir, is the great secret. You remember the newspapers and scientists were dumfounded when we made the first trip to San Francisco with no sign of gasoline or other fuel aboard. Well, there's a reason."

"You have discovered a new source of power?"

"I have," responded the aviator simply. "Radium."

"How's that?" Dorgan asked with lid-veiled eyes.

Then Babcock, enthusiasm flushing his cheeks, accurately described, while the magnate listened intently, how, in experimenting with the precious new element, he had found that it was the long-sought requisite for unrestricted aerial travel; how within its minute compass was contained light of dazzling quality, heat in interminable intensity and power of practically exhaustless extent; how, experimenting with the minute quantity he had been able to purchase of the Austrian Government, the sole owner of the new element, at the sacrifice of almost the last penny he had accumulated through his airship inventions and exhibitions, he had discovered a method by which to apply its tremendous possibilities in the generation of power to the driving of an aeroplane. In the transcontinental trips, he had fully tested its availability.

"But this radium costs a fortune to produce, doesn't it?"

"More than that," smiled Babcock. "Austria's price is at the rate of nearly eight billion dollars a pound. But half an ounce would be ample for our purposes. The force concentrated in radium, you know, is inconceivable to the human mind. It is a million times more powerful than any other agent known. That you must know, is what makes the equipment of this expedition to the moon so expensive."

Casually tapping his finger tips upon his desk, Dorgan suddenly changed the current of his inquiries.

"You have already made some sort of an agreement with Professor Jekyll regarding your share in the prospective profits of this enterprise?" he suggested.

"Really," replied the aviator with a surprised smile, "we have been so busy with the technical side of the matter that we have only paid the slightest attention to the more sordid details. Our only hope in this direction was to get the financial co-operation of some man like yourself who could afford to advance the cost of equipment."

"Ah," was the millionaire's unenthusiastic comment. Then he proceeded: "I'll have to consider the matter a little

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longer. It's a little too risky a proposition for instant favorable decision. Meanwhile, since Jekyll is coming in this afternoon, you may as well leave these plans for a little further inspection."

Babcock glanced up quickly, a puzzled look upon his face.

"Of course they'll go no further," he said. "The secrets are the fruits of my ingenuity, they have not been patented and until they are, of course I want to protect them."

"Oh, they will be all right," responded Dorgan with stiffening lip.

When the aviator had withdrawn, the millionaire summoned his secretary.

"Have accurate copies of these plans made at once and both the originals and the duplicates returned to me before our friend Jekyll comes in this afternoon," he ordered, pushing Babcock's precious documents toward his assistant.

When the door had closed again behind the secretary, Dorgan rose from his desk and stepping across the heavy rugs quietly pushed a snap lock into place. He was now secure from all interruption.

Quietly he returned to his desk, extracted a circlet of keys and hurrying to the secret receptacle in the wall, thrust aside the picture which hid its front, fitted a key and swung the small steel door open.

Into the cavity he thrust his hand and drew forth a package. Almost gingerly he hurried back to his desk and carefully unwrapped the parcel.

His eyes glowed as they set themselves upon the dazzling diamond Professor Jekyll had shown him on the previous day. He ran his heavy fingers over its sparkling facets. His breath came quite quickly and sharply. He leaned over as though he would caress the gem with his lips. A stranger, noting the unnatural glow in the man's eyes, the tense attraction in his face, might have considered him diamond-mad.

Then of a sudden he threw off the fascination and hastily returned the stone to the secret box. As he snapped back the latch of his office door, a grin, wide but cold, swept his face.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE STORM'S GRIP.

Babcock, on his way uptown to the aviation landing stage in Central Park, which had been set aside by the city as a result of the widespread growth of air locomotion, gave more than one thought to John Dorgan. Trying to be fair, he could not rid his judgment of the impression that this man of millions was his rival, though unsuccessfully, for the heart of Virginia Larned. He felt, too, the influence that the man as the girl's trustee must have over her. He was sorry that the financing of the celestial expedition of Professor Jekyll was to depend on the whim of this stern-faced, enigmatical man of money.

Then it came to him in an indistinct sort of way that Dorgan's conduct was not entirely comprehensible. His keen eyes had not failed to note the barest approach to embarrassment when the magnate had asked that the airship plans be left with him. A strange request surely. What should Dorgan know of a mass of intricate engineering plans? Or why should he want these precious blue prints left with him for an inspection that could reveal to him no more information than Babcock had already imparted to him? Could it be possible that this dominating, grasping man who had wrenched the scepter of business control from all competitors was now harboring a hope that, through Professor Jekyll's discoveries, he could appropriate—? No. The uncompleted suggestion was too preposterous. He must conclude that Dorgan's desire to re-examine the aeroplane plans was based on his inherent caution, the result of two-score years of grappling with other clever and cunning financiers.

As the landing stage was neared, he caught a glimpse of aeroplanes ascending and descending. With the eye of an expert he noted the peculiarities and shortcomings in the methods of each flyer. He saw the little single passenger monoplane swoop down to be quickly followed by a more substantial bi-plane with two passengers and then by a huge tri-plane that came diving down to earth with the faces of five passengers peering expectantly from the shimmering windows of its richly furnished cabin.

Involuntarily his thoughts sped back to the experimental days five years before when the man of the air bravely grappled with the problem of keeping one man afloat in the air and when each page in the record of daring achievements bore a smear that told of some intrepid soul who had yielded up his life to advance the new and perilous art.

As he rode still nearer he heard the chug-chug of the airship motors and the sibilant whirr of the flashing propellors. The sounds were like sweet music to his ears. When he came fairly up to the edge of the broad stretch of greensward dotted with a full score of oddly fashioned flyers around which a few mechanicians busied themselves and a few more passengers dawdled, he reverted to the time but a few years back when the mere sight of a single, unsubstantial machine attracted throngs of curious spectators.

The only unusual gathering he found about his own flyer which lay at the far end of the field with its great aluminum planes swaying slightly in the breeze. Inquisitive eyes were peering into the cozy little cab with its upholstered seats for two and its furnishings as rich as those of any millionaire's limousine.

"It's Babcock's," the onlookers whispered as the inspecting throng grew and Virginia Larned, hearing this unconscious tribute to the skill and intrepidity of the man she loved, felt a glow of pride.

She turned rosily as he came up. Thrusting out her hand impulsively, she smiled archly:

"You see I'm on time. I just couldn't miss your invitation for a flight."

"I'm glad to see you again," he whispered as he pressed her hand and looked into her face with eyes that spoke more than his words. "But I'm not so sure we ought to start back just now. That sky to the West looks threatening."

She followed the direction of his glance and saw a low bank of gray black clouds pouring upward as if belched out of some huge chimney from a busy furnace below. Then she turned back to him winsomely and said:

"Why, you told me only the other day that storms no longer held any danger for you."

"Alone, yes," he replied lightly. "But not when I have a passenger like you."

"But I'm not afraid," she expostulated. "Besides I must get home to luncheon for guests will be waiting for me. I'd be late if I returned by the auto. So, sir," she went on quite decisively, yet bewitchingly, "you'll just have to take me back by the air line. And besides," she lowered her soft voice to a whisper, "it'll help me to nerve myself for that trip to the moon."

"Well, possibly we can get you back to the Nookery before that blow spills itself," he finally consented. "But we'll have to hurry."

The aviator made a hurried inspection of his machine. He tried sundry valves and cocks, tested his gasoline tank to see that his supply of fuel was ample, patted the broad planes to note that they were firmly braced, released his powerful ten-cylindered motor in its house of glass, let the great propeller slash the air for a moment, then shut down his power and donning a pair of gloves turned to Miss Larned.

"We're all ready," he said quietly and opening the door of the cab he handed her firmly into the upholstered seat beside his own. With a word of caution to his mechanician and the crowding spectators, he followed her, closing the cab door behind him.

Setting his feet against levers in the bottom of the car and grasping two more with his hands, he gave one rapid glance at his machine, front, back and sides, then at the rolling bank of storm-laden clouds behind him.

"Steady now, we're off," he said quietly and he pulled a lever. Instantly the powerful motor began to throb and the propellor to whirr. As the "Rapier" slowly gathered headway along the ground, he pressed a button with his foot and thus elevated the small forward plane. The flyer quickly responded by lifting itself into the air gracefully. Two hundred feet up Babcock restored the front plane to a level basis and with a slight twist of the steering wheel pointed the machine to the east.

"Glorious, isn't it?" Virginia cried in the aviator's ear for the incessant buzz of the propellor made ordinary tones useless.

Babcock nodded his head smilingly.

"What a marvelous scene," she exclaimed, clasping her hands before her throat as she peered out of the cab's heavy glass windows at the spectacle spread out below them.

And well she might. They were now upwards of five hundred feet in the air and gliding with absolute smoothness over the East River that looked like a great thread of silver uniting the shimmering waters of bay and sound.

The sun was struggling to penetrate the steadily-increasing billow of cloud that had curled through the heavens since early morning. Occasionally a golden ray fought its way through and poured a strip of yellow, as if from some giant searchlight, now illuminating some narrow, folk-congested street where people looked like ants, now throwing a dazzling shaft athwart the waters, now dashing the far-spread field and forest with an emerald sheen.

Far to the south stretched the uneven piles of the great metropolis. Towers and spires and skyscrapers that looked like the works of superhumans as one gazed in wonder and admiration at them from below seemed fit but for pigmies beheld from on high. Monster bridges that bore their half million and more people a day appeared now like spider webs stretched between upright pegs.

Central Park that but a moment or two ago was a mass of rustling trees and close-cropped lawns and shaded walks and strolling visitors was now to Virginia only a long blur of green. Once she turned to look back along the thin brown strand that marked upper Fifth avenue to discover her own beautiful home but it was indistinguishable among the blot of red and black roofs.

They were fairly over Long Island quickly. The green backbone stretched

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as far to the east as the eye could reach, dotted here and there with the great homes of millionaires that reminded one of feudal castles. To the south an unending line of white showed where the Atlantic tossed. To the north rippled like sheen the waters of the sound.

"How high and how fast?" asked Virginia with a catch in her throat as she leaned far toward her companion.

Babcock cast a quick glance below and another behind.

"We're up about a thousand feet and we're going about sixty miles an hour," he shouted.

Even as he spoke there came out of the surging clouds behind them a jagged flash of dazzling yellow light. The aeroplane seemed to quaver as the lightning passed eastward and fairly shook when the thunder rumbled up to them. A spatter of rain blurred the windows of the cabin.

Babcock shot another sweeping glance back toward the on-rushing storm. As he did so a surge of wind caught his machine and tipped it violently.

Virginia, with face blanched but lips compressed tightly, involuntarily gripped the aviator's arm. She looked at his set face in the gathering gloom, so thick that it seemed as though she could almost feel it.

"Don't worry, little girl," called Babcock as he gripped the steering wheel with both hands, "I think we'll be out of this in a few moments. We're traveling almost as fast as the storm."

The tenseness in the girl's face relaxed a trifle at the reassurance. But it returned quickly when a swish and then a blast of wind pitched the car forward till she was almost tossed from her seat.

The automatic balancing mechanism that usually served to right the aeroplane instantly in windstorms appeared powerless to counteract the force of the intermittent gale. Babcock strove with the aid of his emergency ailerons to bring his machine to equilibrium. In a fair way to effect it, he caught with his eye the flash of another lightning streak.

Simultaneously he felt his flyer quiver anew. Then came a blinding flame of blue that enveloped one wing of the "Rapier," threshed loose the steel supports of the plane and with a terrific snap that momentarily paralyzed Babcock and Virginia, darted earthward. The aeroplane lurched wildly, lost headway and then, in a sudden gloom so thick that Babcock could barely see twenty feet ahead, began to sink.

CHAPTER X.

LIFE SAVING MANEUVERS.

Dazed for an instant by the sickening glare of the lightning stroke that had partially wrecked one wing of his aeroplane, Babcock was quickly the cool, resourceful navigator of the air.

As he felt his machine lurch and wobble with the damaged wing flapping violently in the storm, his first thought was of the woman at his side.

"Don't worry, dear heart," he cried above the raging of the gale and the whizzing of his propellor, "we'll get out of this yet! Just hold tight and let me have free use of my arms."

He added the last words because at the lightning's impact, Virginia had tightened her grip upon his arm. But she was more self-controlled now. Instinctively she realized that his movements must not be impeded by any act of hers. In their present dire extremity. So she transferred her cutch to the seat, and white-faced and trembling but silent and set-lipped, she faced the emergency.

The aviator's first act was to shut off his motor. He intuitively realized the folly of trying to drive ahead at high speed with one wing partially swept away. If he did that, he would be certain to have his equilibrium entirely destroyed and to send his machine plunging toward the earth at far greater velocity than if he allowed it to fall naturally—which now seemed well-nigh certain.

To add to his difficulties, however, a very flood of rain descended upon them. The drops driven by the wind snapped against the glass of their cabin like so many exploding torpedoes. Moreover, the gloom was so deep and the rain so thick that it was impossible to see ten feet beyond them.

Maybe this was merciful for had their vision been unobstructed they must have realized their peril much more completely and apprehension might have rendered Babcock's hands inert in the few fleeting instants when speedy action or the lack of it meant life or death.

The wrecked plane was on the left side of the flyer. Only a section of the wide aluminum wing remained. Babcock knew from the spasmodic lurch of his machine and the list to the left that he had lost much of his sustaining power on that side and that if he was to avert a disastrous tumble to the earth he must use some bold expedient—and and at once. There was no time for even a momentary consideration of this new problem in aeronautics.

In the flash of his mind's eye, he remembered the scene at the International aviation meet the previous year, when his machine, at a height of nearly two miles and soaring higher at the rate of more than a mile a minute, suddenly went dead when his motor coughed, gagged and stopped.

Fifty thousand spectators in the crowded stands below, watching his feat, stared breathlessly as they beheld him growing smaller and smaller until he appeared no larger than a bee lost in the blue empyrean. And he at his utmost height, panting for breath in the rarefied atmosphere, had looked down on the receding scene with a strange exhilaration that made his ascent seem more like an intoxicating draught than a record-breaking exploit.

So, when he found his machine helpless at the great height, there was almost a smile on his face as he set his wings for a long swoop downward. The aeroplane shivered for an instant as its motive power ceased but, fairly held by the air meeting its wings, and directed skilfully by Babcock at the steering wheel, it soon settled to a gradual descending glide.

Five miles away he came to earth as gracefully as if under full control and without a jar to his machine. The country marveled at the thrilling feat of which Babcock's only comment was, uttered with a dry smile:

"Oh. it was just like shooting the heavenly chutes, that's all."

There was that other time, too, when in flying out over the ocean at Atlantic City with a passenger, his motor had balked and the passenger had collapsed in fright as he felt the machine wabble beneath him. To save his terrorized companion he let go the steering wheel and his levers and clutched the man till he had partially recovered and was able to hold himself in.

In that moment, however, the aeroplane had lost all direction and was gyrating downward at a tremendous speed. Before Babcock could trim the planes and bring his machine to a steady base again, it had plunged, like a great, wounded gull, into the sea.

Clutching his helpless companion in their new extremity he had held him up among the entangling mass of wreckage until the last vestige of his own strength had gone. He was only semi-conscious when boatmen, hurrying to the scene, drew him out with his passenger and only after heroic efforts revived them.

It was these scenes that flashed through Babcock's mind now like the snap of a camera. Yet subconsciously they gave him encouragement in his present peril. He had evaded death in situations as threatening as this; then why not in this?

Babcock sat on the right side of the passenger car. He pointed his rudders so as to carry the "Rapier" in a great cricle, keeping his undamaged wing on the inner side of the swoop. Then he turned to Virginia:

"Get up and throw your weight on my side of the car," he yelled above the snapping of the raindrops, the whizzing of the gale and the intermittent rumble of thunder.

Virginia who had found it difficult to maintain her equilibrium on the side of the flyer as it dipped sickeningly away was glad to move. But she hesitated an instant. The aeroplane was lurching so awkwardly that she feared she would be pitched through the windows.

"Down on your knees then and crawl to this side," roared Lester as in a flash he noted her strained face.

She obeyed instantly. Regardless of gay gown or immaculate gloves she slipped to her knees and gripping the front of the cabin crawled slowly toward Babcock's side of the machine. Then bracing herself against his knee she threw all her weight in the direction he had indicated.

The results of the aviator's maneuvers were almost immediately favorable. The weight being shifted, the flyer regained some of its equilibrium. But most of all Babcock's expedient of directing his flyer in a circle half a mile wide and dipping its nose gently toward the earth was effective in preventing a straight plunge downward.

To both aviator and Virginia it seemed hours before the gyrating flyer, trembling and flapping like some winged bird, the prey of a sportsman's gun, sinking lower and lower at each revolution, finally struck the ground with a jar that shivered the glass in the cabin windows, broke off propellor blades and threw the girl close to the bird man's arms.

Unmindful of the shower of glass that fell all about them, of the sheet-like rain or of the noisy flapping of the "Rapier's" broken plane, Babcock drew Virginia to him in a tense embrace. Her arms, too, crept their trembling way about his neck till her hands met and her fingers intertwined.

"My darling," he whispered, "I thank God you're safe."

She looked up with a wan smile but with eyes resplendent with the ardor of her love.

"And so do I that you are safe," she murmured. "How wonderfully you managed it all.. I thought we should be dashed to pieces."

"I had my misgivings, too," he answered with a sober twist of his head. Then with a quiet smile he went on: "But an airship, you know, that is damaged in midair is just like a ship at the sea's mercy and driving toward the reefs. There's always a chance until you strike. And as long as there's a chance, why, a fellow must keep working."

"Oh, I think you're wonderful," the girl breathed, tightening her clasp about him.

For reply he kissed her long and ardently. Face suffused with a pink glow, she finally withdrew from his embrace.

"I suppose you'll not care to try that trip to the moon after this experience?" Babcock asked half banteringly.

"Why not?" she flashed, tossing her head back with a smiling defiance. "This experience has whetted my appetite for more adventure. Of course I'm going."

"Well, then, let's get out of here before we fall prey to pneumonia and land

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* * *

It Was to Laugh.

Venus was trying to teach her wilful son to discriminate nicely.

"Why," she asked, with some severity, "did you laugh at that chap who took his departure so hastily at the sound of his girl's father's footsteps on the stair?"

Cupid smiled broadly at the recollection.

"He made such a beautiful bolt for the door that I thought he was a locksmith," replied the young god artlessly.

* * *

FRECKLES.

It Is Easy to Remove Them.

For years I tried every known remedy without success. Skin specialists and doctors said I would take [illegible] the grave. I fooled them all.

I cured myself by a simple discovery. I will send you the prescription free if you will write for it. It took off my freckles and the freckles of thousands of others. It will remove yours. It will clear the worst complexion. Write today. Address Mrs. E.,C. White, P. O. Box, Dept. No. 164, Buffalo, N. Y.

* * *

Buying the Best.

Jewels are expensive, and one cannot expect to have the genuine unless he pays liberally for them. An east side merchant emphasized the fact in this conversation, which is said to be true history:

"What's the difference," a young girl asked the jeweler, "between yer 5 cent diamond rings and yer dime ones?"

"With the dime ones," said the jeweler, "you get a better diamond."

* * *

TRY MURINE EYE REMEDY.

for Red, Weak, Weary, Watery Eyes and Granulated Eyelids. Murine Doesn't Smart—Soothes Eye Pain. Druggists Sell Murine Eye Remedy, Liquid, 25c, 50c, $1.00. Murine Eye Salve in Aseptic Tubes, 25c, $1.00. Eye Books and Eye Advice Free by Mail.

Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

* * *

Never Heard It.

"People tell me," said the casual acquaintance to the busy business husband of the popular society hostess, "that your wife converses charmingly."

"Yes, I've been told the same thing myself," answered the other.

* * *

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (2)

Do You Get It?

Mother—No, child, I won't let you go and see "Camille." It isn't a fit play.

Daughter—Oh, please, Dumas.

* * *

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

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Painlessly Removed in Two Days

The Blue-jay plaster has proven such a success that 5,000,000 corns are removed with it every year.

It is applied in five seconds, and it fits the toe so you forget it.

The pain ends instantly and, in 48 hours, the corn comes out completely.

No soreness, no pain, no inconvenience whatever. It is the right way, the only way, to get rid of a corn. Millions have used it. Don't you want it, too?

Note the Picture

A is the harmless red B&B wax that removes the corn.

B is soft felt to protect the corn and keep the wax from spreading.

C is the toe band, narrowed to be comfortable.

D is rubber adhesive. It fastens the plaster on.

Blue-jay Corn Plasters

15c and 25c per Package

Sample mailed free.

Also Blue-jay Bunion Plasters.

Sold by all Druggists.

Bauer & Black, Chicago and New York

Makers of Surgical Dressings, Etc. (80)

$1.00 for this 16-in. PLUME

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Send your money by mail, express or money order. Remember that your money will be refunded if the plume is not entirely satisfactory.

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Hunting case, beautifully engraved, gold finished throughout, stem wind & stem set, fitted with 7 ruby jeweled American lever movement. Guaranteed 20 years; with long gold plated chain for Ladies or vest chain for Gents.

$3.95

20 Year Guarantee

Let us send it without expense to you C. O. D. express charges paid by us, for examination at your nearest express office and if you think it a bargain and equal in appearance to any $15.00 gold finished watch pay the express agent $3.95 and it is yours. Mention if you want Ladies,' Men's or Boys' size.

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Ventriloquists Double Throat Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary and imitate birds and beasts of field and forest. LOADS OF FUN. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents or 12 for 50 cents. DOUBLE THROAT CO. DEPT. D FRENCHTOWN, N. J.

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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875,000 COPIES WEEKLY

ADDRESS ALL LETTERS TO
THE CHICAGO LEDGER
CHICAGO, ILL.

GENTLE JABS.

Not every spinster is sorry.

And many an open book is hide bound.

The man with a grouch is known by his bark.

Some men are almost as contrary as some women.

You can save a lot of trouble by not borrowing any.

Excuses and weeds are plentiful—but what good are they?

You can't sharpen your appetite by eating with a knife.

The more talking a man does the more denying he has to do.

A true friend is one who sticks to you like a porous plaster.

We feel sorry for a lazy man who lives in a hilly country.

Sometimes the best way to save money is to spend it well.

Speaking of some men's heads—there is plenty of room at the top.

It is easier to pose as a hero than it is to get a medal for heroism.

And occasionally a curbstone broker is also a hearthstone breaker.

A coquette is like a war veteran—she goes through many engagements.

Perhaps a rolling stone gathers no moss because it isn't on the level.

Nothing ventured nothing gained—but you may be able to keep what you have.

Some people can't see the error of their ways because of their habit of looking at yours.

Perhaps some married men talk in their sleep because that is the only chance they have.

A girl may be willing to elope providing there are no wedding presents within her range of vision.

How about the eternal fitness of things when a young man sows wild oats and reaps a grass widow?

One of the things calculated to drive a man to drink is to arrive at a meeting place ten minutes late and find that the other fellow isn't there.

History says that the ancient Egyptians honored a cat when dead. We can see where the ancient Egyptians were cognizant of the eternal fitness of things.

in the bottom of a six-foot hole instead of on Professor Jekyll's mounts of the moon."

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Economy a Failure.

"This is a mighty good cake, Merle. Did you make it dear?" asked Mr. Wilkins of his wife. She shook her head. "No," she answered. "I bought it at Touthson's." When Mr. Wilkins suggested mildly that Touthson's was regarded as rather extravangant, his wife made the astonishing statement that she knew it, but she was never going to be economical again.

"What a resolution for a Mrs. Newlywed! I suppose that you are aware that my salary doesn't attract general attention on account of its size."

"I know that we ought to be careful about expenses, because you don't get nearly so much money as you deserve. But it's no use for me to try to economize. Just let me tell you all I've been through to day.

"This morning I decided to make a cake. I found a recipe that sounded good and I thought that by leaving out two of the eggs and half of the butter it would be a lot cheaper and more wholesome.

"You never saw such a looking cake. Fit for nothing but chicken feed, and we don't happen to keep chickens in our five-room flat." Merle laughed a bit tremulously.

"But that was only the beginning of my trouble. You know I was invited to the Hillards to luncheon today and I put on my wistaria chiffon. I looked so very dressed up in it that I felt like telephoning for a taxicab, but I thought it would be extravagant, so I went on the street car.

Just as I alighted, an enormous draft horse came by and stepped into a puddle and splashed me from head to foot. O, Lawrence, I was a sight when I went into the Hillards' house! The maid wiped off some of the mud, but of course, among all those elegantly gowned women who had come in their carriages and autos, I looked terribly bedraggled. I left early and decided that it doesn't pay to save cab fare and ruin the best clothes I have."

"Hard luck, Merle, still I don't think your experiences argue against the general practice of economy."

"When I got home," continued Merle, apparently oblivious to her husband's sage remark, "I felt I must do something to make up for the misfortunes of the day, so I got out that coat of yours that you intended to send to the cleaner's, rubbed the spots with some cleansing fluid. I thought it foolish to pay to have a fine new coat like that cleaned all over, just on account of two little spots.

"I got it so wet that I had to press it, and O. Lawrence, I'm dreadfully sorry, but it's all the fault of that electric iron you bought, which gets so much hotter than any one expects. I burned a great big hole in the coat!"

"Not the coat to my new tweed suit?"

"Yes," admitted Merle, ruefully, and Lawrence expressed his feelings in a long, low whistle.

"You are quite right, dear," he said, after a moment's tense silence; "economy is poor business. Don't let's have any more of it!"

* * *

Tradition of Creation.

Among the traditions handed down from generation to generation is the creation of the world. I will try to give an account of what has been told by the old people of my tribe.

At one time this earth of ours was uninhabited and covered with water to an unknown depth. Upon the surface of this vast ocean floated a pipe, which served as a sort of boat for the Great Spirit.

He had in his possession a duck, a beaver and a turtle which were his only companions. The Great Spirit knew there was clay at the bottom of this vast seat, whose depth was beyond the imagination.

He asked the turtle to dive down to the bottom of the sea and bring him some clay. The turtle did as he was directed, and at a certain length of time reappeared upon the surface without any clay, for he was unable to reach the bottom. The beaver was the next to go down with a determination to succeed, only to come up to the surface empty handed as the turtle.

When the duck's turn came it staid at the bottom longer than the others. It appeared upon the surface with a small amount of clay in its mouth. The Great Spirit took the clay and threw it in different directions. A vast area of dry land was formed.

He next created the sun and the moon, which gave light to the world. A man and woman were next created, from which all the Indians are descended. He gave the sacred pipe to the man and instructed him concerning its care, until the end of the world.

The pipe is made of wood, but it is so hard and solid that many think it is made of stone. It is held sacred by the Arapahoes to this day, and they claim that if the laws concerning its care are violated it will bring a destructive flood to the people on earth. They consider themselves God's chosen people and they claim the Indians and white people were created separately.—Moses Friday (Arapaho), in the Red Man.

* * *

Ready for a Ride.

"Do you believe in auto suggestion?" asked the psychical youth.

"Sure," answered the ready girl, "if it's a good gasoline whiz."

It Does
The Heart
Good

To see how the little folks enjoy

Post Toasties

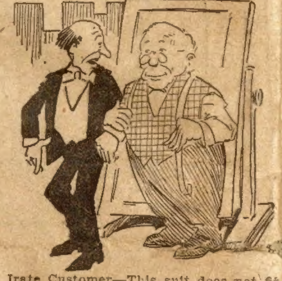
with cream.

Sweet, crisp bits of pearly white corn, rolled and toasted to an appetizing brown.

"The Memory Lingers"

Postum Cereal Co., Limited,
Battle Creek, Mich.

The Tailor Knows.



Irate Customer—This suit does not fit at all; why, I can't get my hands into the pockets.

Tailor—That's all right, your wife has a smaller hand than you have.

Get Our Big Furniture Book

The two articles we show in this small advertisement give you some idea of the big values you will find on every page of our Furniture Catalogue.

Contains a thousand big values

This book illustrates and describes a bigger, more complete line of furniture than you will find in a dozen retail stores, and at prices that are at least a third less than your local dealer will ask. Every article is perfectly illustrated and accurately described. No matter what you may want in the way of furniture, rugs, carpets, portieres or upholstery materials you will find it in this bargain book. Send for the book today. A post card will bring it. Then compare the prices and values with those you can secure any where else. GET THE BOOK NOW. Address the place nearest you.

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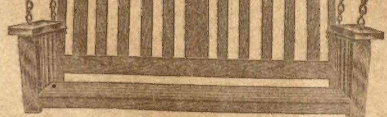

Large Weathered Oak Porch Swing $2.98
Lowest Price Ever Quoted

This Large, Heavy Porch Swing is one of the most popular pieces of furniture on the market, and owing to our large contract we are able to give you the best bargain that has ever been offered in a high grade swing. It is made of oak in the weathered finish; is eighteen inches deep; back is twenty-one inches high, and can be furnished in three different lengths. It is extra strong and solid and all bolted together. It is of the best construction, and if you want for your porch the most comfortable piece of furniture that is made we advise you to take advantage of this special offer. Price includes chains and hooks complete ready to suspend from ceiling. It is without doubt the most artistic and most comfortable piece that you could possibly have for your veranda or den. Have this swing ready for the warm summer afternoons and evenings that are now so close at hand.

Weight of the six foot length is about sixty-five pounds. Shipped direct from factory in Missouri or from Chicago.

RF 92145—42-inches long. Price $2.98
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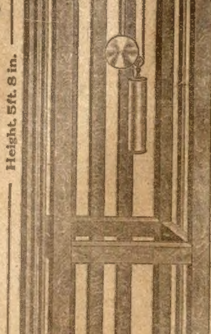
RF 92147—6 feet long Price 4.85



Height 5ft. 8 in.

Order No.
R 92410

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$4.35 ONLY

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Has full brass weight movement and runs thirty hours with one winding. The movement is thoroughly reliable and makes a splendid time keeper. Also makes a very ornamental piece of furniture for the den, hall, living room or library.

This clock is full size being 68 inches high, the height of the average person. The width is 16½ inches, depth 11 inches. Shipped direct from factory in New York for our eastern customers, and from Chicago or Kansas City for our western customers. Shipping weight about 50 lbs. crated. Our quantity purchase makes it possible for us to give you the greatest value that has ever been offered in this line. Its simplicity of outline makes it impressive and there are many homes in which a clock of this pattern will be preferred to any wall timepiece because of its striking appearance.

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19th and Campbell Sts., KANSAS CITY
Chicago Avenue Bridge, CHICAGO

JUSTINE SPRAGUE, ACTRESS;

Or, THE MYSTERY OF LOVE

By ELLA MARTIN

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CHAPTER VIII.

ROSE MAINARD'S FATE.

Rose Mainard had been but slightly wounded by Mrs. Barrington, as has been told. But the saddest thing had been the suicide of the poor, insane wife, when the latter turned the pistol on herself, thinking to wring the hearts of her faithless husband and the guilty Rose by her own death. That the infatuated man and woman should feel no remorse, and continue their guilty relations, only shows the weakness of some natures, but that Barrington should weary of Rose and refuse to marry her was characteristic of the average man who wrongs a woman; where he has had criminal freedom he refuses to be bound. Hence, the guilty Rose was bound to suffer the same humiliation suffered by the wronged wife; then she, too, was impelled by jealousy to seek revenge on Barrington, planning to take his life and threatening him with death and thrilling his coward heart with fear. All this was the natural fruit of lawless pleasure and sin.

ROSE MAINARD went home and that evening wrote a lengthy letter to Justine Sprague. This she put in another envelope and addressed the letter to Mrs. Sprague, with a request to forward the enclosed to Justine, if her whereabouts were known; if not, to keep it until she was located. She added, as an incentive to having her instructions carried out, the fact that Justine would return to them when she had read the contents of the letter, though she might not tell them the true reason for her leaving home in the first place. The influence which caused her to take the step was too intangible, too subtle for explanation. All this Rose told in her own way, but it mystified the mother and son; for no mention of Rachel gave them the key to her message. But it caused them to seek Justine always that the letter might be forwarded to her.

And meanwhile—while they waited, Rachel lived in hopes of accomplishing her purpose with a bomb-shell hanging over her head, unconscious that with all her calculating she had committed one error that might prove her overthrow.

Lately, since Rose Mainard had sunk lower in the scale of respectability, she had refused to have anything more to do with her. She had been a hard one to shake, but by coming out plainly with her disapproval of her conduct, and refusing to speak to her until she had mended her ways Rachel had finally got rid of her society. But she had made her her enemy. This was the fatal mistake she had made in all her planning.

This act of Rose's to enlighten Justine was not taken to right a wrong, but for spite. She wanted to revenge herself on Rachel Raynor because she, who had been so treacherous, so deceitfully guilty of underhanded means to separate an innocent young girl from home and friends should think herself too righteous to associate with one who had not plotted, but merely stepped aside to follow her heart's guidance. Hers was one kind of sin, and Rachel's another. There might be degrees of wickedness, and one was more degrading than the other, perhaps, but a crow cannot call a blackbird black without casting a reflection on his own color.

"I will pay Rachel off before I turn my hand to the greater matter. She deserves it, the sneak! Then let Bruce beware! I will have justice or revenge! I will not submit to the treatment I have received from him lately; nor will I kill myself as did his poor wife. Neither will I waste my time and hate on the other woman. It is he who has deliberately wronged me, and it is he who shall suffer."

Thus reasoning Rose wrote the letter to Justine first, and then dispatched one to Bruce Barrington. And while the message to Justine remained pigeonholed in Alston's desk, awaiting the time when it could be forwarded, or delivered in person, the other went straight to its destination. And in due time Rose received an answer, with instructions to meet the writer near Donaldson & Company's glass block at eight o'clock the following evening. Bruce added that they would take a carriage and drive around and talk the matter over.

"I knew he would not dare refuse," she said to herself. And straightway began to build air-castles for the future, when she should be Bruce Barrington's wife.

"How will Rachel feel, I wonder, when she finds me respectably wedded, and she turned out into the cold world, all her scheming gone for naught, while her good friends, the Spragues, look down upon her as much as she looks down on me—despised as much, though for a different kind of treachery."

Why she wrote the letter to Justine before her own affairs were straightened out she did not know; but it seemed as if she must get it off her hands as one makes his will when he beholds death approaching. However, Rose was not thinking of the near approach of any calamity, much less a meeting with the grim destroyer. She was going to marry Bruce in a short time; she would settle the question tonight. Then she would have no time to tend to Rachel's case. She would be too busy getting ready to become Mrs. Barrington.

She had no tender feelings toward Bruce now; he had treated her shabbily. But she would compel him to come to her terms; he should marry her since it was her due. She would see to that. She had already taken steps to prevent Rachel from being successful in her plotting, and she had done so merely to pay her for her scorn.

When she reached the glass block on First avenue and Sixth street to keep her appointment with her lover, she paused at the corner doorway and waited. She had waited long, and it was growing dark, when a man whom she had often seen in Bruce's employment, came to her side.

"I am to take you to Mr. Barrington," he said. And Rose followed him to a closed carriage standing by the curb on the other side of the street, and entered with his assistance. The door was closed, and the man mounted the driver's seat.

She could not see the face of her companion, though when she entered she supposed Bruce to be within. She began to think it strange he did not speak. She wondered now that he had not stepped out and assisted her to enter. At the time she had thought him angry, and therefore neglectful. She had expected an altercation, but she meant to bring him to time before the ride was over. But now this strange silence appalled her. She did not notice in which direction they were going, but after a while she discovered they were out of the city and near the river. She began to be afraid.

"Bruce," she said, more gently than she had intended to speak, "have you nothing to say? You know what we have to come to an understanding about. I don't see how you can get out of marrying me."

There was no answer.

"Why are you silent?"

Still no answer.

She did not know whether the man inside the carriage was Bruce. She never knew. For suddenly the figure in the semi-darkness lurched toward her. Two hands sought her throat, and before a sound of any magnitude could pass her lips, their grasp had tightened—tightened, till the breath was strangled out of her body.

Did Rose Mainard, in the short moment of consciousness allowed her, remember the poor, wronged wife who had taken her own life because of her? Did she recall the words of Justine Sprague had spoken to her in warning: "Retribution will surely overtake you!"

And this was retribution! The hand that had led her into the path of sin had directly or indirectly sent her guilty soul to answer to an outraged Maker. Whether or not the real murderer was Bruce Barrington, or like Harry Hayward, he had used another as an instrument to rid himself of one whose importunities he had grown weary of, was never known. The crime could not be fastened upon him, for next day, when the body of the strangled girl was found in the river, and suspicion fell upon him, he was arrested, charged with the murder of Rose Mainard. But he was not held for trial, for at the coroner's jury it was proven that he had spent the previous evening at the Dewey theater.

To the public the alibi did not seem strong enough. The hour at which the girl was supposed to have met her death was of course decided by physicians. But might there not have been some mistake in their reasoning? was the people's query. Or did Barrington make use of a tool, and hire the nefarious work done for him? At any rate, the crime could not be proved against him. And the police failed to find the real criminal. But in the eyes of the public Bruce Barrington was guilty.

And poor Rose—not wronged, but deliberately wicked, as are all love-pirates—sleeps today in the same cemetery as the wife whom she supplanted in the heart of the villain who was true to neither.

And Bruce went on his own way remorselessly, a new victim in his toils.

Oftentimes the wicked flourish for a season—sometimes it is for their whole earthly season; but some day, somewhere, they will get their reward—their just reward. How could it be otherwise?

CHAPTER IX.

We have seen what a bluster Donald Mainard made over his sister's conduct, when we met with him in the West Hotel in Minneapolis. But alas, for the inconsistency of human nature. Don was not such as his sister; but he had faults of his own. He was of the same blood, and men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles, so the good Book informs us.

To be sure his love for Justine Sprague was sincere, and honorable in a way; but it was selfish. And he had forgotten his sister's wrongs in his pursuit of Justine. He had sought her out and made her acquaintance at the first opportunity. He had forced his company upon her anywhere and everywhere possible. He had pestered her with his attentions till she was ready to flee his presence and hide herself from his sight. This she could not do and follow her profession.

She was weary enough at last to throw up her work and go back to the friends who had made her promise to come home if she should ever stand in need of refuge. But even to escape the importunities of this man whose attentions were distasteful to her, she could not make up her mind to go back to Lakeview. Her pride no longer stood in the way, since second thoughts had enlightened her mind on some things. Still, there was Rachel, who by this time must be Alston's wife and mistress of the Sprague home. She could not go where she was obliged to witness their happiness.

Ah, no! It was public life for her now, and toil no less hard because she had a taste for it. Fame was afar off as yet, and she was weary—so weary! If she could hear from home—only hear how they were, and learn whether they had forgotten her.

And it was out of this longing, this desire to hear from the loved ones at home, that Justine wrote to Mrs. Sprague. And later the tender, loving note she had sent brought a reply which was accompanied by Rose Mainard's lengthy letter.

It was while Justine was awaiting this reply that her experience with Don Mainard and his adoration brought her to a determination to cut his acquaintance forever. She had gone with a group of her fellow actors up into the belfry of the courthouse in the city where the company was playing. By some chance Donald Mainard was there before them; but as he was up in the bell-loft, on the platform next the bell itself, she did not notice his presence. Later, when he appeared at her side, she supposed he had just arrived.

At the eighth story the steeple began, and as they stepped from the elevator, one among their number asked the man who had brought them up at what time the elevator would stop running for the day.

"At five o'clock, sir. If you are not ready to go down by that time you will have to descend by the stairway. And the chances are you will find yourselves locked inside the courthouse for the night by the time you have reached the bottom steps."

"Oh, that would be dreadful!" exclaimed a small, vivacious brunette. "But I think we have plenty of time. Of course we don't want to come down till we have witnessed the clock strike. I want to see that great hammer hit the bell."

"Well, we only have to stay a quarter of an hour for that," her escort replied.

"I know, but we want to see it strike the hour as well as the half and the quarter. I have always liked to hear the pretty little tune that precedes it at a distance, and I want to find out if it is as nice to listen to up here. But oh, just look at the stairs we have to climb!"

This was said as they began the ascent of the eight stories of winding stairs. They all started on the upward trip with laughter and jests—all except Justine, who was rather silent and distrait. She was the last to take her foot from the winding iron stairs, and just then the bell began to sound the half hour.

"Oh," exclaimed the aforesaid brunette, to the man whose arm she clung to, "what made you let me jump?"

Don Mainard came down the ladder from the platform above on the opposite side, as they all stood gazing at the great hammer as it struck the bell, and passed them without being observed. But he had seen and recognized Justine. However, he left the belfry and went down the dark, spiral stairs. Justine was standing at the railing, looking down upon the city, whe he returned, some time later, and went directly to her side. She started when he spoke, and she became aware of his presence, but replied to his remarks.

"You are looking sorrowful, Miss Sprague—Justine," he observed after the conversation was fairly opened. "Why will you persist in clinging to a dream when I have offered you a real love?"

Justine started.

"A dream?"

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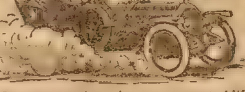

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"You mean Mr. Sprague? What know you of my affairs—whether I dream, and if I do, what know you of whom I dream? You presume, sir, when you address me thus after so slight an acquaintance!"

"Justine!"

"Miss Sprague, if you please."

"Mrs. Mainard, if you will but have it so," he said, growing bolder and taking her hand before she divined his intention. For he saw that the others were leaving the place, not noticing that Justine was apart from them. And Justine herself was too indignant at that moment to take notice of their movements. If once they reached the bottom of the spiral stairs without missing her, the rest was easy. They would enter the elevator and the door leading into the tower would be locked behind them. If they missed her then they would be told that she had been taken down before their appearance. That would look strange to them at first, perhaps, but not so unlike Justine, after all. She had come without an escort, and would have grown tired of waiting for the rest of the party. Thus they would reason, and go on without her. At least, that is the way Don had figured it. When he saw Justine was among those who arrived just as he was about to quit the place, his keen mind grasped the opportunity thus presented. He went back to the elevator, made his arrangements, and returned, intending to engage her in conversation till the others had gone. They would see him in company with her, and expect him to bring her down. He could do this more easily, as the crowd she was with had come in pairs and though they had insisted on her accompanying them, they had left her to herself, particularly as she seemed to desire it.

The time of closing was at hand. If they were left in the tower together she must either agree to marry him or spend the night in the belfry with him. He had bribed the man who ran the elevator, and a key that would unlock every door between him and freedom reposed in his pocket. He was in a position to ruin her fair name if she refused his offer of marriage. To do him justice, he had no intention of going to that extreme, he meant merely to frighten her into a promise to marry him. Of course Don knew that to brazen it abroad that she had spent the night locked in the belfry with him would be but a good advertisement to one of her calling. But he also knew Justine well enough to know it was the thing she would least care to have happen to her. It was the sort of notoriety she would most object to.

And the Spragues—ah, when he thought of them his heart leaped with exultation. She would do anything rather than to know that the Spragues might some day pick up a paper in which her name figured as principal in a scandal such as this would make; though it was only her professional name. Thus satisfied that he had played his cards well, he spoke again:

"Justine, I love you. You know it, you must have known it for a long time."

"No," she replied, drawing her hand away, and straightening herself with dignity, "it is a matter I have given no thought to. You must have seen your attentions were not welcome; and had you been a gentleman you would have discontinued them before I was obliged to tell you so."

Her words stung him to the quick; but he was master of the situation, and therefore triumphant. No more would he follow this woman, no more would he humble himself before her. It was she who should cringe to him.

"Miss Sprague," he said, "since you insist on being given a title, it is I who am in command now, so descend from your lofty height and condescend to listen to my suit. I would wed you under any circumstances. But before I followed you from Minneapolis here I vowed you should be mine by fair means or foul. Let it be by fair means, sweetheart," he added, softening his voice. "Be my wife and try to love me."

"Sir, let me pass," Justine said, ignoring his proposal; "I must find my friends."

"Your friends! Have you any?"

She was too wroth to speak, so she merely attempted to pass him.

"Wait a moment," he cried, putting out his hand to detain her, "then you may go to your friends," with a sneering emphasis on the noun. "But do friends desert one? If they were really friends who cared for you or your interests, would they depart leaving you in the tower at closing time, when they know you will be locked in for the night?"

A horror began to dawn on the girl's understanding, and with a look that haunted him to his dying day, she sprang past him to the door. But she spoke as she did so to justify her friends, though time was precious now.

"They saw me with you, of course, and supposed you would escort me down, or that we had already gone."

With this she wrenched open the door and stepped into the dark stairway.

CHAPTER X.

JULIUS TO RESCUE.

With wildly beating heart and limbs that trembled, Justine began the descent of the winding stairs. At the foot of each staircase she peeped into the adjacent rooms in hopes that the others were loitering there, as they had done on their upward journey, visiting every room to look from the windows on the city beneath.

Donald followed more leisurely, and when the last landing was reached he was nowhere in sight. He was giving her time to fully realize that she was really locked in with him.

Like a fury she wrenched at the door, and beat upon it till she saw it was unavailing, as were her calls for help. She was yet eight stories above the street. When she saw that her efforts were wasted, a calmness settled over her, and she began to think of a way out of her dilemma. She could break one of the windows and fling herself from it to the street, and when her mangled corpse was picked up, it would be unrecognizable, perhaps, but her need was not so urgent as that. She divined this man's purpose; it was to compromise her so that marriage with him would be desirable. She had never heard of such a thing—at least, outside of a novel, and then not when to do so would but help to launch the victim on the top wave of her profession. But she saw that he believed she would yield to his demand rather than to take the risk of her escapade, as it would be called, coming to the ears of the Spragues. She tugged at the window, and had succeeded in raising it sufficiently to get through when Don appeared on the bottom step.

"Stop right where you are!" she cried. "If you come near me I will fling myself from the window. Say what you have to say from a distance, sir! And remember there is a day of reckoning awaiting you. Whether Alston Sprague is my lover, or only my benefactor, he will horsewhip you for this! You think I will promise to marry you rather than have it come to their ears that I spent a night in the belfry of the courthouse with you. How foolish you are! Do you think they would not believe me when I gave them my version of the situation? And if they refused to believe me, do you think I should care for what they might think—at least, enough to induce me to become the wife of a man like you? As for the rest of the public, it is nothing to me; its possible praise or blame doesn't interest me at all. Some women would welcome such an advertisement as this would make. As for me I should simply retire from the stage, and the world would hear of me no more. How long do you think it would remember me or my affairs?

"So you see that all your plotting to ruin my reputation would not result in driving me from my work—a profession that I am already getting tired of. Now, sir, what are you going to do?"

"Justine, I love you! Listen to me!"

"You insult me, sir!"

"By heavens!" He started toward her with the ejaculation on his lips. But he paused as he saw her turn toward the window. She could throw herself from it to the street beneath before he could reach her, if she willed, and she looked as if she would do it.

There was nothing more for him to say, since she understood his scheme, and had proved to him that it was of no effect. It did not frighten her into submission as he had expected. He had meant to announce to her, in a dramatic manner that would impress her, his intention of forcing her promise to marry him, by threatening a sensational disclosure in the daily papers, the titles and subtitles of which would attract the eyes of the public at home and abroad. But somehow his scheme had fallen flat. He had not taken into consideration the sort of person he had to deal with. He knew now from what she had said that the family she belonged to was above, both in character and position, caring what might be said by a scandal-loving public. The Spragues were the sort that would believe Justine innocent even without an explanation. They would protect her and care nothing for what might be said by those who were ungenerous enough to gossip. And as she had just told him his ruse would result in nothing more serious than driving her from her profession into obscurity. He must plead with her now instead of trying to frighten her.

"Listen," he said again, "I love you, and can take you from this life of toil into a home of your own. If you will try to love me we can be happy together. Say the word, and I will unlock the door and take you down, and no one be the wiser."

He did not guess at the storm his words would arouse in the heart of the girl he was trying to win. Justine Sprague did not stamp her foot, though an inward rage consumed her, it was too deep, too quiet for that. But her hands were clenched and her teeth set. Her eyes would have slain him if glances had the power to slay; though it was not murder that was in her heart, but a supreme disgust, an overwhelming scorn. Her voice was low, but tense, when she spoke:

"And you have the key to that door? It was not chance, then, you turned to advantage, but a deliberate plot to force me to your terms or ruin my reputation. You bully! You coward! Now listen to me: I would rather suffer all you have planned than be the wife of such a sneak. But I defy you! You cannot harm me. My reputation is not my character; you might blast the former without injuring the latter. My reputation might suffer without hurting me,

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but to marry a man like you would be to damage myself, to pollute my own soul! I prefer to let my good name suffer rather than to injure myself. Now you see that your plan to force me into a union with you has resulted in nothing except to make me despise you more than I did before."

It was Don's turn to get angry, and he lost his temper completely, and with it all reason. He hated her in that moment. Often the line is crossed from baffled love to intense hatred by some natures.

"I will make you repent those words!" he cried fiercely.

Justine saw the insane light in his eyes, and turned toward the open window. She remembered that desperate deeds had been committed in places of this sort, where no help was at hand. At first her threat to seek death by throwing herself from the window rather than be polluted by his touch had been but a bluff to keep him at a distance. Now she lost her presence of mind and turned to the only way of escape as she saw him approaching. Whether he would have reached her in time to prevent her mad act was never demonstrated. At that moment a loud noise was heard outside the door, as the elevator was brought to a standstill, and a key was turned in the lock.

Yes, in spite of what Don had intimated, that she had no one to take an interest in her affairs, there was rescue at hand. For Julius Western and an officer of the law stepped into the room in time to behold the tableau, and both took in the situation at a glance.

"Officer, arrest that man!" Julius cried. Then he went to the side of Justine, who was trembling now, and almost too weak to stand.

When the rest of the party returned to the hotel and learned that Justine had not arrived there before them, they saw at once that she must have been left behind in the belfry. No one believed then that she was seen to leave the tower; either the man was mistaken or purposely falsified. But when it came to Mr. Western's ears, and he learned that Donald Mainard had been in the belfry, he began to see light. Jealousy makes one's senses keen—too keen, sometimes, and things unthought of are imagined. But Julius understood just how matters stood between his rival and the girl he had hoped to win. He had always been an admirer of hers himself, but he had no hope now, for he thought her wholly wrapped up in her art. And he acted without thought of gaining her gratitude as a reward when he went to her rescue. He had taken the officer with him, and also the man who tended the elevator and had charge of the keys. But he had no thought of accusing any one. He merely suspected that the two had not been locked in by mistake, or if so, that it was a situation Donald Mainard would take advantage of to make himself obnoxious to Justine by making love to her. But when he saw the attitude of the two, he divined as did the policeman, that there was something wrong, and he ordered his arrest.

So while Justine was escorted home by Julian, Don Mainard was taken by the officer to the station house. No charge was preferred against him, however, and as soon as released he went back to Minneapolis, a sadder and a wiser man, but one morose and bereft of all interest in life.

He had made as big a failure of his love affair in one way as his sister Rose had in another. But there was one thing left for him yet, he told himself, with clenched teeth. Vengeance on his sister's murderer!

CHAPTER XI.

FACE TO FACE.

As has been intimated, it was fated that Justine was to have some experience with the tender passion outside her love for Alston and Donald Mainard's preference for her. Here in the company was a different sort of man, one all emotion and delicate attentions; importunate but respectful. At first it annoyed her to be worshiped by one she cared nothing for. But from a tolerance which she was obliged to force herself to feel, she grew interested and after awhile concerned. She had never sought to arouse the admiration of any man, not even Alston to whom she had given all the adoration of her youthful heart. This man was Julius Western, the actor Rose Mainard had twitted her of; though at that time she had not noticed his glances of adoration, and believed his efforts to be agreeable to be but the natural manner of a courteous gentleman. And every one in the company knew that Julius was in love with Justine before she even suspected it.

His gifts of books and flowers were never accepted. Attentions from one she was indifferent to did not interest her. But persistency will win some kindly feeling in return, even from a reticent person like Justine. But his passion for her surprised and awed her. She did not understand it. There was nothing emotional or passionate in her nature, only a love deep and strong. But she was lonely, so lonely, that in spite of a nature that knows but one love, she craved human affection. There are degrees of love, and devotion from a worthy person will win a place, be it ever so small, in a heart, even though it is not an hungered. But when she realized the strength of the love she had inspired in the man she respected and admired, as well as in one she could not bring herself to even like, she contemplated flight a second time. She could not give to Julius her friendship when he had asked for her love; and she could not feel even friendship for Donald Mainard.

But our heroine was older now, and felt that to go away unknown to all was not the right thing to do. She had committed that error over three years ago, and this time she would have an understanding with all whom it might concern.

This painful duty was barely over when an answer to the letter she had sent home was received. Elated over the loving message it contained and wishing to sever herself entirely from the society of these two, her later lovers, Justine made way for her understudy and went back to Lakeview. Both Julian Western and Don Mainard knew now they had never had the slightest chance of winning her. The one took his fate like a man and continued with the company; the other, as we have seen, went back to Minneapolis, where he now acknowledged to himself he should have remained in the interest of his sister, whose fate he had heard of through letters from home. He cursed himself now because he had not staid by her and protected her. But it was likely he could not have prevented her fate—and it was not too late now to avenge it.

He was disconsolate and brooded much over his disappointment and his sister's tragic death. Sometimes he was tempted to think he might have prevented it. And he had been following a will-o'-the-wisp, something he could never have hoped to overtake, had he but had sense enough to grasp the fact.

"What matters it what I do with my life?" he said. "Whether it is unworthy my love for Justine or not? I am no more to her than the dust under her feet. Even in our school days she scarcely noticed me."

Thus some men are influenced for good or evil by their love for a woman. Donald's was a nature that depended on whether his love was reciprocated whether he lived to a high standard. When he thought Justine was to be won he meant to do nothing to render himself unworthy of her. But now in the bitterness of his disappointment he was reckless.

He had been back in Minneapolis but a short time when Justine, homesick and weary of her struggle with the world, arrived there. She had put the envelope containing the writing Rose Mainard had left for her in one corner of her suitcase to be opened and read at her leisure. Other things occupied her mind and left her thoughtless of what the message might contain.

And so at the close of an autumn day Justine walked into the home of her childhood and flung herself into the motherly arms of Mrs. Sprague. She had forgotten Rachel, or that she might be already wedded to Alston. Somehow of late this seemed less likely. And also as the conviction grew she beheld Rachel's hand in all that has taken place. How blind she had been! And then she remembered Rachel, and that she would be obliged to meet her face to face—the woman who had been instrumental in driving her from her home, and that they would understand each other at last, and each know that the other understood.

Perhaps she ought to feel humiliated before Rachel for coming back after being foolish enough to leave at her instigation. But she drew herself up with her characteristic independence.

"I was here first," she said to herself "Rachel has never had the place in their hearts and their home that I have held. How foolish I was not to see it."

"You will never leave us again, Justine?" Mrs. Sprague said. "Promise me you will stay with us always." Truly, the good woman was overjoyed to see her protege.

"I will never leave you again—never!" the young girl replied. "I ask your pardon for my act. It was no way to repay you for your kindness to me. But Alston, will he welcome me?"

"Ah, indeed, Justine! He has never been the same man since you left us."

"And is he not married yet?"

"Indeed, no; he has not thought of such a thing."

"Not thought of it? Why, I thought—"

Here she paused, she could not mention Rachel's name. It occurred to her for the first time that no one but Rachel had thought of it at all. She looked up then and beheld Rachel Raynor standing in the aperture leading into the boudoir, the draperies held back with one slim hand. How long had she been standing there? she wondered. Evidently long enough to hear the few sentences concerning Alston that had passed between herself and his mother.

The eyes of the two young women met, and glance challenged glance. The two understood each other in that moment. Rachel saw that Justine was aware of her true character at last, and the blood surged out of her cheeks, leaving them even paler than their wont. But she knew the girl's generous nature and felt that she would never betray her to her friends. Instantly she went forward with what courage she could call up and greeted the other with forced cordiality.

"Ah, the truant returned at last!" she cried. "Has the stage disappointed you, Justine? Or have you come home for the wedding?"

"The wedding!" All the blood receded from the heart of Justine Sprague. It was true, then? though his mother did not seem to know of it.

"Yes," answered Rachel, "my wedding, of course."

Justine had no further doubt. But she asked, looking the other straight in the eyes without flinching.

(Continued on page twenty.)

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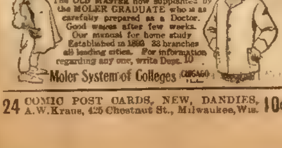
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The letters of request have poured in; letters of grateful thanks have also poured in. From every part of the continent, the people whom I have cured of that terrible affliction—Deafness—are thanking me.

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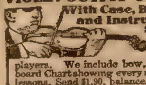
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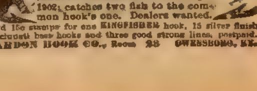

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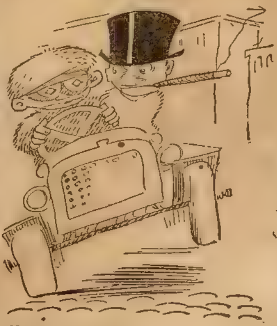
Obscure.



New York Autoist—Where are we?

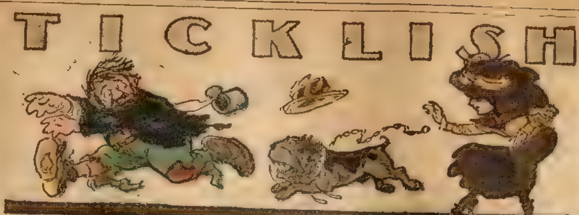
Chauffeur—St. Louis, sir!

New York Autoist—Yes, I know, but what State?

Under Suspicion.

"Is your friend a cowboy?"

"He claims to be a cowboy, but I think he got his dialect out of a novel."



The Swappers.

Silas wasn't quite sure that Jedediah's old horse was quite up in value to his cow and he demurred.

"Wa-all, I dun'no', Jed'diah," he said, scratching his head dubiously. "That there old coaw o' mine hez her good pints."

"Sure she has, Si," returned Jedediah, "but I calculate ye gotta agree that a coaw's to be jedged not by her pints, but by her quarts."

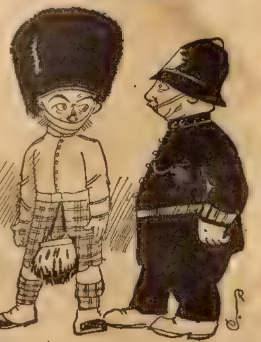
Dyspeptic.

"He used to complain because he never got what he wanted to eat."

"Yes, but he's rich now."

"Yes, and now he complains because he never wants what he gets to eat."

More Trouble.



Bobby—Now, then, clumsy, look where you're goin'. You're steppin' on my feet!

Sandy—Well, I did ma best to lepp o'er 'em, but a Hielander's only human. I'm nae a kangaroo.

Sure of the Fact.

A teacher in the Northeast Manual Training high school had just finished a lesson on "food" when one of the younger scholars of the class sought the attention of the speaker.

"Smith, next to me, says he heard of a baby that was brought up on elephant's milk and gained five pounds a day in weight," said one of the students.

"That's rubbish," replied the teacher. Then addressing Smith, he added:

"Tell me whose baby it was who was brought up on elephant's milk?"

Smith hesitated and then replied:

"Well, sir, it was the elephant's baby."

How to Find Motor News.

Subscriber (who has just bought a car)—Say, what's the matter with this sheet of yours? Why don't you print some real live automobile news—something that people are interested in?

Editor—Why don't you read the paper and find it? Here it is, right at the top of the seventh page—"Mortgages and Failures of Yesterday."

How Rumors Start.

"What's this I hear about the wedding? Some say the groom didn't show up until very late."

"It wasn't his fault. He was there, but he wasn't very conspicuous. Seems he got elbowed into a corner behind some palms."

More So.

Kicker—There is nothing that makes a woman so happy as to get a $4 hat for $3.85.

Snicker—Oh, yes, there is."

Kicker—What?

Snicker—To get an $8 hat for $7.89!

Modern Romance.

"Yes, I was fascinated by a golden curl."

"And did you marry the owner?"

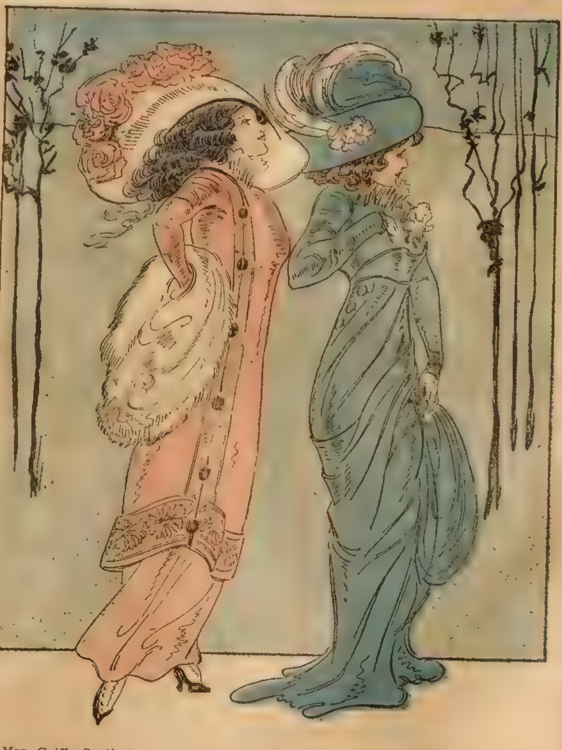
"Oh, no. I found I could buy one like it for a dollar."

The Reason.

He—Truth lies at the bottom of the well.

She—I suppose you let it fall there. You do handle it so carelessly.

BETWEEN NEIGHBORS.



Mrs. Griff—So that bad little boy of yours hurt his head; how did it happen?
Mrs. Biff—Why, that good little boy of yours dropped a brick on him.

One Condition.

"It's all very well," said Grouch, "to talk about forgiving your enemies, but it's not easy to do."

"You're right," replied Dudley, "we shouldn't be expected to forgive our enemies except when they freely admit that they don't deserve our forgiveness."

Awful.

Mrs. Willis—Isn't it awful the way people paw over goods in a store?

Mrs. Gills—Shocking. I went over to the waist counter this morning and picked up every single garment and there wasn't one that didn't have the marks where somebody had been handling them.

Teeth Talk.

"The Kaffirs have fine teeth," remarked the party of the first part.

"See some dazzling ones in Spain," chimed in the party of the second part.

"Best I ever saw were right here at home in a dental office," declared the third member of the cast.

Years and Years.

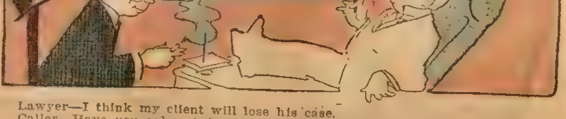
The music hall artist was visibly annoyed by the "booming" of a few cockneys in the rear of the theater. Finally she advanced to the footlights and shouted in anger:

"I'll have you know that I appeared before King Edward VIIth!"

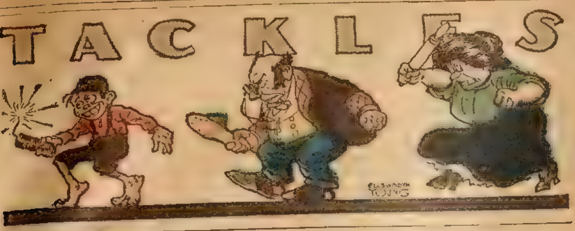
And the cockney crew roared back:

" 'Ow long before?"

MOST IMPORTANT.



Lawyer—I think my client will lose his case.
Caller—Have you exhausted all the means at your disposal?
Lawyer—No; but I've exhausted all the means at his disposal.



Up to Him.

Tom—I'm dead sore. I lost $5 today. I feel like somebody ought to kick me.

Tess (absently)—Why don't you ask father for my hand tonight—he's right in the library.

The Easiest Way.

"So she wouldn't give you back the engagement ring, eh? What did you do?"

"I just let the installment man get it."

Gave Boy a Chance.

"Son, I hear you have joined the boy scout movement?"

"Yes, dad."

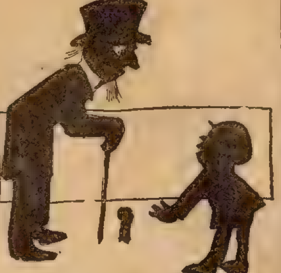
"Well, s'pose you scout ahead and see if your mother is sitting up for me."

An Illustrated Lesson.

School Teacher (wishing to illustrate the meaning of the word slowly)—How do I walk.

Johnnie—Please, sir, bow-legged!

Information.



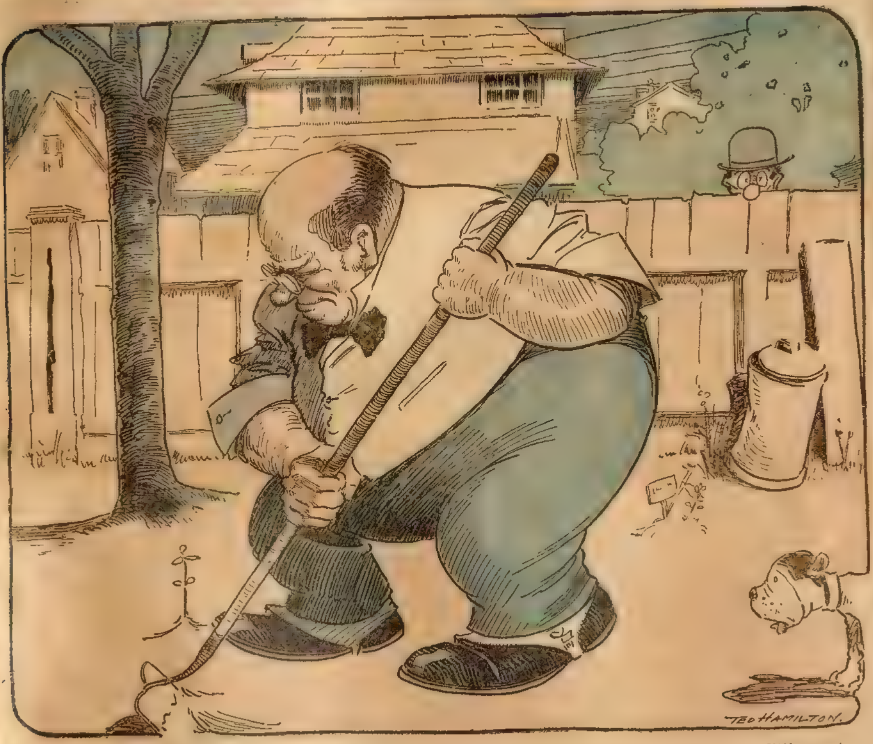
Stranger—Sonny, how can I get to the railway station from here?

Boy—Have you got a carriage?

Stranger—No, my little lad.

Boy— Well, then, you'll have to walk.

THE GARDENING FEVER.


TED HAMILTON.

Some microbe worketh in a man
  When springtime rolls around,
And makes him formulate a plan
  To till the mellow ground.
He wants a garden of his own
  On which to lavish care,
Where hand-made lettuce may be grown,
  And all such dainty fare.

He knows that he can wield a rake
  Just like a hired man,
And feels assured his skin will take
  A lovely coat of tan.
And when he goes down to his work
  What stories he can hatch
To tell the office boy and clerk
  About his garden patch!

Then let him have his little sport,
  And let him plant his seeds;
We know the harvest will be short,
  And mostly run to weeds;
And that the outcome's sure to be,
  Unless he has good luck,
Ten dollars' worth of energy
  For ten cents' worth of truck.

A Kid's Interpretation.

Caller—So your sister and her fiance are very close-mouthed over their engagement?

Little Ethel—Close-mouthed! You ought to see them together!

Certain of That.

Mack—Do fish make brains?

Denby—Can't say, but I know they make liars.

Be Different.

"I understand he's one of your leading citizens?"

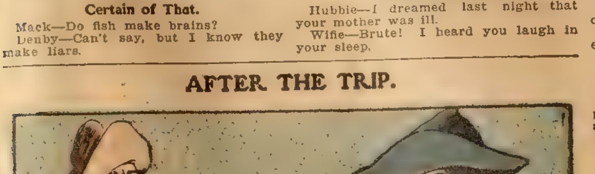
"He is, my boy, but for goodness' sakes don't follow his example."

Caught in the Act.

Hubbie—I dreamed last night that your mother was ill.

Wifie—Brute! I heard you laugh in your sleep.

AFTER THE TRIP.



Piute Pete—Yessir, I saw a feller in a dime museum in Chicago who eats [illegible] and tacks. What do you think of that for a dish?

Bad Bill—Well, there are some fine points about it.

A String of Suitors.

"Then you won't marry me?"

"I must really decline," answered the popular belle. "Step inside, please. You are delaying the line."

His Status.

He—Who's that gentleman over in the corner?

She—That's no gentleman. That's my ex-husband.

Proposal in High Life.

"But I cannot live without you."

"Yes, you can. Run along. You're paying as much alimony now as you can afford."

Had Several.

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Katherine—What does she collect?

Kidder—Husbands.

The Very Man.

She—Mamma thinks the man I marry must have a small fortune.

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David Grant's Sacrifice;

A Tale of Human Pawns

By MASON RAY

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CHAPTER XI.—Continued.

THE day following they took leave of Hindman, but failed to name their desination for obvious reasons. Grant had selected far off Alaska as an ideal hiding place while he searched for riches. Ada had assured him of her intention to guard his secret, but he feared that the doctor might later suggest the fact of his existence by some chance remark and set officers on his trail. Therefore he set out for his destination by detours intended as blinds. Consequently, while fate had been steadily moving her pawns to a focus, Grant slipped through her fingers and concealed himself in the far North.

After two months' rambling that included a glimpse of Europe, sea voyages by devious routes to Vancouver, the two fitted out and started for a Northern mining town. A few days later they were established at Mrs. Agnes Holt's boarding house, while Grant explored the region for a promising claim.

The mining village consisted of one street lined with rude buildings. These included two stores, a restaurant, two saloons, one doctor's office and three boarding houses, of which the one patronized by Grant and Alf took the lead. This success was due in part to Mrs. Holt's excellent cooking and sailor-like cleanliness and part to the dimpled, smiling face of her daughter, Rosie, who assisted at table waiting. No one attentive to Rosie's bright presence, as she lightly tripped in and out of the neat dining room, wondered that miners lingered over meals and made remarkable attempts at ornate toilet. Alf was no exception. His second entrance to his place at table was marked by the donning of attire that combined the best points of a cowboy, a soldier and a miner.

Being obliged to economize and wishing to be near his work, Grant built a cabin on his selected claims. The situation extended along the base of a low hill range some three miles from the Pacific coast. This strip of land had been abandoned as worthless, but, as better sites were occupied by earlier claimants, newcomers were forced to accept undesirable territory.

Reluctantly, Alf moved into the new quarters and resumed bachelor's fare. Rough furnishings were contrived from lumber, conveniences came into being like magic, pictures, cut from magazines, adorned the walls and the place took on a certain amount of homely comfort.

"This ain't so bad," Alf conceded with an admiring glance about at their not unsuccessful home making. "Now, if we had Tom Tucker here to run the commissary department," he suggested.

"Tom would freeze stiff in the first blizzard," his partner reminded him.

For a month of Alaskan summer the two labored at sinking shafts with a view to reaching pay dirt before the long winter set in. During this length of time Alf worked with enthusiasm. Then he passed judgment.

"When I uster dig holes on the farm we got back crops. But here we be lifting dirt and nothing comes outen the ground but store bills. Which lasts reminds me, Johnny B., that we're in acute need of stomach wadding. Better trot down to Pearsall's before dark and stock up."

Being thus reminded, Grant armed himself with a basket and hurried over the three miles of foot trail to the village. He entered the town from the south confines and proceeded up the street towards the stores. His cap was well back on his head, he whistled cheerily, better satisfied with his prospects than at any time since his enforced exile. He had neared Pearsall's and was about to enter when a woman emerged from the store. She glanced up at the sound of whistling, then stood an instant in her tracks as if turned to stone. Grant, in turn, stopped his tune midway while he stared, amazed, in the dark face. Confronting him, with her intense black eyes dilated in astonished recognition, was the woman of Pienta alley.

"Mrs Gorham!" Grant exclaimed. "You here?" But the woman, without reply, darted past him and presently entered a house some distance down the street

"She's more uncomfortable at being seen than I am," Grant mused. He wondered what effect the accidental meeting might have on his personal affairs. He reasoned that the woman must have previously known of his presence and had kept out of his way. This looked as if she was satisfied to let him alone if she received similar treatment. His sense of security returned. Within the store he purchased his necessities and a few luxuries. Immediately after he started, whistling, homeward.

For weeks the partners lifted barren sand from their small shafts. They now had a succession of these narrow pits, and each time the buckets lifted remains of broken shells and worn gravel David abandoned the excavation and commenced another. Evenings Alf consoled himself for this unremunerative labor by visiting the town. His partner, instead, pored over books concerning geological formations by the well replenished fire. Over sixty degrees abrupt change in latitude increased his respect for fireside enjoyment. Each night Grant read increased numbers of pages and each night Alf prolonged his visits.

This routine finally impressed Grant with the idea that Alf might be in evil company. He wondered that he had not before looked into the matter, knowing that the saloons harbored a choice assortment of unhung villains. Acting on the impulse, he donned cap and mittens, replenished the fire, then sallied forth in quest of his young friend. The crisp snow of Alaska's early winter covered the ground. Northward the sky dully flamed with fan-like shafts of the aurora. Under his feet the snow was packed in an oft-used trail. The air stung with almost Arctic cold, but its effect was invigorating like a draft of wine. With quick, light tread David passed over the intervening three miles. His first stop in the village was at a small groggery owned by a man named Slagel. Within, about the great box stove, drinking and listening to a phonograph, were a number of miners in working clothes.

"Lost anything, Burton?" a miner named Dudley inquired as Grant stepped in and glanced about the room.

"I thought," Grant explained, "that Alf might be down town somewhere. I see he's not here. Good night."

Some distance further on the searcher stepped into a more commodious resort, managed and owned by a villainous appearing character known to the village residents as Si Gamely.

The low-ceilinged, roughly built room was crowded with men in miners' or frontiersmen's dress. Several stoically silent Indians lined up in the background. At the rude bar a man stood waiting for an ordered drink. As Grant entered he half turned toward the door to see the new arrival. His eyes had the alert expression of a hunted beast's. His coarse features and sandy hair held Grant's attention. The ex-lawyer stared at the flattened nostrils, the plebeian face. Only once before in his life had he seen the duplicate of that countenance. Then he perceived in the keen eyes regarding him recognition—and defiance.

"Lanigan!" he shouted. "I thought you were dead!"

At the sound of Grant's voice every man in the saloon turned towards him. Gamblers paused with cards held in air ready to play. A bartender looked over his shoulder while the beer overrun the schooner. Si Gamely, the ruffianly proprietor, stepped forward.

"There's no one here of that name," he jerked out with an ugly look.

"Then why's he staring like a show window dummy and why did he start at the sound of it?" retorted Grant.

"Most anybody'd jump when a chap bounces in shouting strange names," brazened Lanigan. His eyes flashed dangerously. With the covert movement of a hard pressed fox he slipped out past the ex-lawyer.

Instantly Grant snapped open the door and dashed after. With the agility of youth he gained on the fleeting form and grasped Lanigan's arm.

"What's the matter with you?" he demanded. "I can't guess your object in denying your name. But this I do know: for over two years I've been dodging arrest for your murder."

"You've been dodging arrest! Come, now, that gag won't work. Don't you 'spose I know you're hounding me? Do you think I'm a fool? Don't you 'spose I know that Anson set you on my trail? Do you think I was taken in by your fake suicide? Not by a long shot, I wasn't."

"What do you mean?" demanded Grant.

"You know damned well what I mean," Lanigan responded angrily. "Didn't you run me down in Africa? Hain't you trailed me to Alaska? Don't I know that when Anson failed he set you to track me? Don't you 'spose I'm on to Anson's tricks? He's a sharp one—fixed up a suicide for me to read about, then set his trap. I know him. He's almost sharp enough to cut himself, is Anson."

"So," cried David with sudden comprehension, "you're the notorious Jim Mosher, eh? And you're the white man we glimpsed in Kawtoo's hut! But, just the same, you're mistaken about my following you. Until this hour I had no idea that you were alive."

"Well, Mr. Brink, that was Grant, I ain't to blame for being alive, am I? I ain't to blame for that poor alley shot, am I? I ain't to blame 'cause you skipped out 'fore you waited to see if I croaked, am I?" He spoke with derision. He evidently disbelieved Grant's statement.

"But I read of your funeral," insisted Grant.

Lanigan laughed.

"You hadn't ought to believe all you read," he jeered.

"But how on earth," queried the supposed murderer, "did you manage a funeral?"

Again Lanigan laughed with huge enjoyment.

"I beat you a trick in the game that time," he chuckled. "We both worked the dead racket, but I went one better I had a hearse and mourners and pall bearers and a damn fine funeral."

Once more he gave way to grim laughter.

"How was it managed?" persisted Grant.

"Hypnotism," explained the man who had cheated the grave. "Them hospital saw bones was so blamed sure I was about to croak it gave me an idea. I waited till the gang got wise, then was moved to a house they fixed ready. Had Blue Pete, who knows how, put me in a trance. Got death papers from the young doc. Then was shifted to the gang's headquarters while my friends had a nice up-to-snuff funeral. But, now, seeing as I'm alive, what are you going to do about it?"

The man put the question without expression. He was plumbing the depths.

"You must accompany me to Detroit at once. I must be cleared of this murder charge," was the lawyer's prompt decision

"All right," acquiesced Lanigan, with suspicious alacrity. "I'm sick of being trailed and I'd sooner stand trial in Michigan than anywhere's else. In that State all they can do is to make me a lifer. In New York I'd catch lightning and in several other places I'd get a rope. So you pay the freight and we'll start."

"To-morrow at eight," arranged Grant. "We'll be on the move before winter shuts the trail. Be ready; and no tricks, mind! You're going back if I have to secure a posse to help. I've had enough evading law."

"Oh, I'll go all right," Mosher, whose alias was Lanigan, agreed.

With his heart pounding furiously with joy and his feet skimming the trail as if he trod air, Grant retraced his way to the hut. His errand to town was forgotten. He could only absorb the astound-

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A great many people go on suffering from annoying ailments for a long time before they can get their own consent to give up the indulgence from which their trouble arises.

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ing [illegible] the man lived [illegible] he was supposed to have murdered. Now [illegible] the [illegible] was over [illegible] of [illegible] he would like to [illegible]. He [illegible], to [illegible] the gang had secured a corpse to suitably round out Lanigan's fake burial.

The problem of forcing the desperate Mosher to the frontier where American police would aid greatly troubled him. His bluff about a posse might hold Lanigan till morning. Aid from the [illegible] was not to be expected. He coul[illegible] confess that he was himself a f[illegible] and ask officers to arrest anot[illegible]tive on his word.

He re-entered the hut, lighted the candle and replenished the fire. He then seated himself by the table to indulg[illegible] dreams of an inviting future. He thought of [illegible]. His blood raced madly through his veins as he anticipated the sweet moment that should see her in his arms. From his inner pocket he produced her heaven-tinted, love-breathing message, and, turning squarely toward the candle, bent his head to read for the thousandth time the well remembered lines.

Out on the pure white of the Alaskan snow skulked a human wolf. The dark form glided over the narrow trail, slouched by the cabin, peered in at the small window, then crouched by the door. Noiselessly he lifted the latch and pushed the door inward. The glossy head of the miner still bent above the blue tinted missive. Suddenly a shot broke the silence, then another. The sound filled the cabin with a loud report; outside, the still frosty air clarified the [illegible]ischarge into echoing mu[illegible] [illegible] stil[illegible]ped the missive that seemed [illegible] fragment of heaven's blue; on the ta[illegible] by the fallen head, there slowly fo[illegible] a crimson pool.

The fire burned down, smoldered, went out. But the man by the table with extended arms remained motionless. David Grant had paid Herbert Brackway's debt to the man he had shot with intent to kill.

CHAPTER XII.

When Alf returned at a late hour he found the door wide open, the fire in ashes and his friend lying half across the table, apparently dead. A pool of congealed blood by the drooping head told the tale.

With desperate haste Alf carried the inert form to the bunk, meanwhile cursing his absence, then fled madly down the trail to the mining town. At the fifth door from the south end of the street he stopped running and pounded on the panels with imperative calls. His vigorous efforts roused young Doctor Allen, who sojourned at that spot accumulating Alaska gold by ministrations to its possessors.

"All right," the doctor's voice answered. "Don't break down the woodwork; it's useful."

"Now, what's up?" he demanded appearing full dressed, case in hand, with a celerity that was astonishing.

Alf briefly explained the reason of his midnight summons while he started the doctor in accelerated movement toward the distant cabin.

"Hold on," Allen called after him; "I can't fly. If you don't slack up a bit I'll go back."

At this threat Alf diminished his furious pace. The two, however, made record time and were soon at the shanty where the doctor hastily examined his patient.

"One bullet in the shoulder," diagnosed the physician, "one scalp wound which has stunned him, both hands chilled—almost frozen. Bring a basin of snow, quick! That's right! Now rub that hand while I bring the frost out of this one."

The two worked some minutes in silence. The stiffened fingers became limbered. A faint color blushed under the nails.

"Now," ordered the doctor, "make a fire while I probe for this lead in the shoulder."

Alf obeyed. In a few minutes he had whittled kindlings and made a fire that dispelled the biting cold. It roared up the pipe with a cheery sound that seemed prophetic of averted evil.

"Here's the bullet," cried the doctor exhibiting a bit of flattened lead. "It entered the shoulder from above and plowed its way down the scapula. It was merely buried in flesh."

"Then,—" demanded Alf with mutely questioning eyes.

"He will live," declared the physician. "The only danger is from blood poison. Evidently the first shot stunned him so that he fell forward. The second shot then entered the shoulder and followed the bone," the doctor said, reconstructing the crime. "But why that first bullet only cut the scalp at his temple instead of entering his forehead is a mystery."

"He was reading," Alf related. "I found a letter grasped in his hand. Do you suppose—"

"That's just it," declared the physician. "The fact that his head was bent over while he read gave his assassin a poor mark. He fired for the cerebrum; instead he racked the scalp at the left temple."

As the doctor talked he administered powerful restoratives. In due time these had the intended effect. Grant opened his eyes and gazed at Alf, who, pale and intensely anxious, stood in line of vision.

"Where were you?" the wounded man questioned weakly being intent upon the first problem that vexed him.

A[illegible] face crimsoned with delight at [illegible] se with [illegible] inquiry.

[illegible] to see Rosie," admitted [illegible]. "That's where I've been ev[illegible]. But I never dreamed you were in danger. Who did this? Who shot you[illegible]

"The white man you saw in Kawtoo's hut," accused Grant. "Try to have—" but the wounded man again lost consciousness.

"He's delirious," Alf told the doctor. "What he said was perfect gibberish. But I'm mighty glad he's got nothing worse the matter. Probably some of them toughs made a guess that we was lifting gold and to[illegible] a look to see. It's some comfort to know they's got another guess coming. It's the first time I was ever glad to be hard [illegible]."

Doctor Allen remai[illegible] another hour [illegible]ve directions to Alf and withdrew [illegible] his disturbed rest. Before morn[illegible] of the truth of his statement. At his insistence Alf left him alone while he notified the village sheriff of the assault. The hour was but six of the morning and the blackness of night still covered the almost Arctic region, yet the flat nosed criminal had fled. Lanigan, with the agility of movement that had made him the despair of police, had departed on one of the trails that led from the town. No one knew his direction of travel, or knowing, refused to divulge the secret.

"Good riddance to bad rubbish," quoted Griffin, the sheriff when Mosher's flight was established beyond possibility of doubt. "If nobody's killed let it go at that."

"Looks the same to me," agreed Alf. Having come to this logical conclusion he hastened back to his charge.

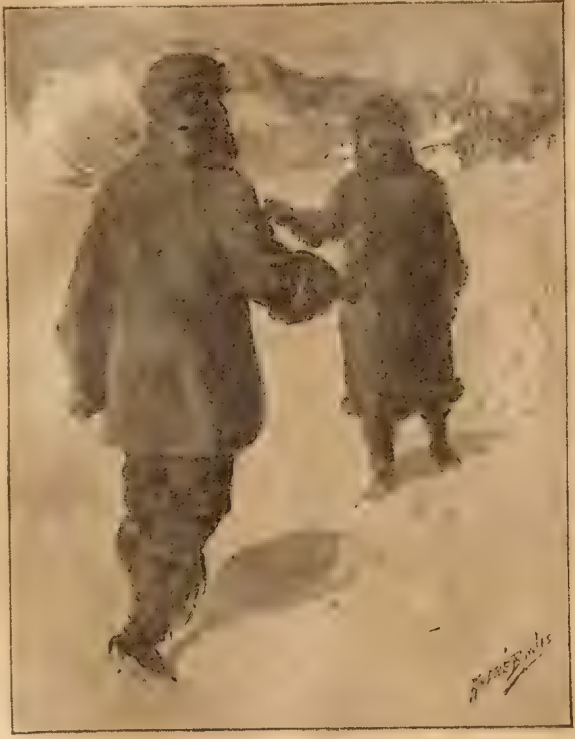
In consequence Grant faced a future that looked much as before. He believed that if Lanigan once reached the frontier he would henceforth evade capture. There was no telegraph line communicating with the border towns. The rapid closing in of winter made the trails unsafe. His wound effectually prevented travel in any case. In short his means of proving Lanigan alive had taken wings. He doubted not that the fictitious funeral included a corpse. This substitute cadaver would be selected to impersonate the real Lanigan. At this length of time after burial no identification was possible. To announce calmly, without proof, that his supposed victim enjoyed excellent health would meet with jeers. Alf could do little in his behalf. Even if Lanigan's portrait graced the rogues' gallery Alf's statement of seeing the original in an African hut might be discredited. He determined to continue his quest for gold and, when successful—if ever—he would take up another quest—a man hunt for the elusive Mosher.

During the days of his enforced idleness Alf labored alone at the disheartening task of handling the frozen nonpaying dirt. The lowest ebb of their finances added to his depression of spirit.

"Let's give it up, Johnny-B," he urged one noon while eating his rations of pork and beans.

For answer Grant opened the book that absorbed his attention during the fore part of the evening that he faced death.

"See here, Alf," he indicated, "here is a topographical outline of this region. Right along there is the gold-filled sand of Nome beach. Now, here on this flat where we located at the base of the ridge, is the old prehistoric strand. I believe the tide once ebbed and flowed exactly where we sit this minute. I believe our claim covers the original beach. I believe that when our shafts touch the old water line we will find another Nome. See?"



"The world is a limited hiding place."

"See? I should rise to remark!" cried Alf. "Why, I can see double. I'd be willing to skim four fathoms of dirt off forty acres."

Being converted to this optimistic view, Alf redoubled his exertions. He toiled early and late while Grant chafed at his inactivity and pondered over Lanigan's probable movements. Depression replaced his rose-hued dreams. This pessimistic condition produced a desire to discuss the entire affair from the beginning with some sympathetic listener. As a consequence he related the whole story of his assumed crime and self banishment to his partner. Alf greedily absorbed every detail with his amazed blue eyes fixed believingly on his partner's face. When Grant finished the recital the former hobo commented with characteristic fervor:

"Johnny-B, you ought to wear one of them halo things around your head. I knew you were no gold brick. You're all wool and a yard wide. You're an A No. 1 martyr; that's what!"

Grant smiled at the image invoked.

"A halo would look fine circling this brown parchment I've brought from the tropics," he suggested.

"And so," Alf mused, after the two had discussed Grant's singular revelation, "this Mosher-Lanigan, who had a proxy, foxy funeral, thought you were chasing him around the globe. Now, wouldn't that take you to the fair? I say, let's not disappoint him! Catching Mosher 'ud be more fun than pounding sand!"

"I'm afraid," Grant quietly hinted, "that we're obliged to pound sand until we find gold. We can't travel in pursuit of a slippery criminal without funds."

"That's so," reluctantly conceded Alf. "So it's up to us to find ancient Nome."

Two days later Alf burst into the cabin, where Grant was employed at

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Elwood, Ind.—"Your remedies have cured me and I have only taken six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I was sick three months and could not walk. I suffered all the time. The doctors said I could not get well without an operation, for I could hardly stand the pains in my sides, especially my right one, and down my right leg. I began to feel better when I had taken only one bottle of Compound, but kept on as I was afraid to stop too soon."—Mrs. Sadie Mullen, 2723 N. B. St., Elwood, Ind.

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ater-getting for the first time after is [illegible]

"[illegible]-dirt!" shouted the young miner. "Feast your eyes on that!"

Under his partner's gaze he thrust a an of coarse white sand glittering with [illegible] of the precious metal.

"Just what I expected to find," Grant eclared. "See! It's the old beach sand! There will be miles of it and every mile n length will yield gold for a width of everal rods. We must take up every oot that the law allows."

"What do you know about that!" cried Alf. "And I'd have sold out the claim for n old hat."

Both the partners were smitten with he gold-fever. Their elation was peculiar to successful seekers after the yellow god. Men have gone hopelessly mad at the instant fortune smiled. Excitable Alf was crazed with joy. Grant forgot his healing wound. Both set themselves to the task of washing out sufficient gold to hire men. The process was low, although frost had not yet hardened the earth at that level. They were, evertheless, obliged to burn brushwood nd heat water for washing the desired etal from the sand and beach pebbles. o one noted their operations. Every ne laughed at the two who sank a succession of shafts on abandoned claims.

But the last shaft had struck the gold-lled, prehistoric strand, and the two on separated enough of the metal for reliminary purposes. They now openly aked out and secured legal title to the mit allowed by mining laws. Next men ere hired and extensive operations commenced along the flat. Immediately the ews spread as if by magic. Men flocked from every direction like crows to a east. In a week the old beach line was arked by a straggling, widely separated row of rude cabins. Every man ent gold mad. The discoverer's name as on every lip. No such find had occurred since miners flocked to Nome. Grant and Alf, with a hired crew, were daily amassing undreamed of wealth.

Within the barroom of one of the less xpensive San Francisco hotels a new arrival listened to the far reaching story of he marvelous find.

"Yes, sir," declared the narrator, "that John Burton has thunk out more 'en a hundred dollars to the square yard! I ad it straight from a sailor on The Molly S. He heard it up the coast. It's o all right. And brains did it. He read book and figured out what no one else had gumption to see. Now he and his partner are rich!"

"What's his partner's name?" inquired he listening stranger.

"I don't just recollect," the man reflected. "Something like Wheeler."

"Was it anything like Turner?" queried he stranger.

"By cracky, that's the identical," ejaculated the news monger. "Know him?"

"Never saw him in my life," disavowed he inquisitive stranger, but his face lighted with pleasure. He had much the appearance of one who has just learned he whereabouts of a long lost friend. Moreover, carefully concealed beneath he lapel of his great coat was a silver tar. Like similar luminaries, this star was subject to eclipse. Its uncovered lory exerted a paralyzing effect on the ongues of men. On this occasion its wner roamed the land with open ears nd his success at thus gleaning information was attested by his expression f profound satisfaction.

At the mining camp Alf and his friend ad realized some thousands from the ew workings. Operations were rushed. uch could be accomplished before the ntense cold of mild winter hardened to ock the ground below the buried beach ne. In the enlarged cabin a Chinese ook made long hours possible and endurable by excellent meals of a red hot mperature.

"We need more men," declared Alf. "We can work twenty shafts as well as ne. And, as Jack Olson says a bunch of ust-too-laters moseyed into town, I say etter get busy and hire 'em."

"Correct," agreed his partner. "I'll go t once."

With the word Grant dropped his task, urned toward the village and started, whistling as usual, down the trail. Half ay he saw, approaching, the stranger om San Francisco who wore the clipsed star. As the officer neared Grant topped. With face set like stone and yes wide staring he awaited.

"The world's a limited hiding place, nson," was his greeting. But his hand was quickly extended to grasp the meeting palm in real friendship.

"My errand is peaceful," Anson, the etective, hastened to explain. "Lanigan ves."

"I know that," Grant informed him. He has been here."

"Good!" ejaculated the officer.

"But, he's gone."

Anson's face fell. "Anyway," he informed his one time prisoner, "it's you m after. Don't scowl. I'm not here o arrest you. Instead I'm acting in the mploy of H. R. Worthington. Now brace p. The millionaire is your father."

Granted stared at the speaker blankly, nbelievingly.

"Your proof," he demanded.

"We'll go on to your shack and a fire," uggested the shivering officer. "When we're comfortable I'll give you a column f stuff that would warm the heart of a ellow journalist."

"How did you find me?" questioned Grant, as they walked in Indian file.

"It was like solving a puzzle," declared Anson. "When the combination was reduced the answer was extremely simple."

"And that?" queried the discovered fugitive.

"Was composed of three B's and a Turner. You were in succession John Bryant, John Brink and John Burton. But throughout you were in company with a youth named Turner."

"I see. Poor Alf, much to his grief, would have landed me in the penitentiary. But here's our shack. Come in."

The two entered the cabin, removed outer garments then seated themselves by Grant's rude desk where a heating stove dispensed warmth and good cheer.

"Now for proof of your extraordinary statement," Grant again demanded.

In clear cut sentences the officer made known the entire history of all that related to the fugitive.

"That," declared Grant at the close, "is, indeed, a sensational chapter." Audibly, he summed up while his trained intellect took stock of each item.

"Only child of millionaire kidnaped by gipsies,—clue to four year old youngster a singular scar received in a carriage accident,—kid wanders back to city of birth and is adopted by benevolent judge, —accused of crime,—flight—supposed suicide,—coffin full of brick,—confession of real assassin. And now," he ended, "I know where I must have seen Mr. Worthington's diamond-studded watch."

"Exactly," Anson confirmed. "You were fond of the trinket as a child. Your father prized it exceedingly for that reason."

"Excuse me if I look dazed at this astounding news. It's rather bewildering."

"Take time for it to percolate your system," laughed Anson.

"After all, the reformation of Herbert, his plucky application to business, is the best of the whole," declared Grant. "That was what I set out to accomplish. If old Herb has made good I'm satisfied. In fact my two years or more of roughing it has been a pleasure."

"Sketch your experience," requested the officer. "I'm interested."

He gazed at his one time prisoner with eyes that spoke what is denied to men. They were filled with genuine affection and unqualified delight at finding the supposed suicide alive and prospering. The loss of that prisoner had been to him a heavy blow because of his admiration for the man.

When Alf, accompanied with his gang of workmen, entered the cabin at the supper hour he eyed the new arrival with instinctive apprehension.

"This is Detective Anson," Grant informed him. "Mr. Anson, this is another adopted brother of whom you've heard—Alf Turner."

Alf glanced from Anson to his partner but discovered only serenity of expression on their faces. The big, handsome detective won his reluctant approval.

"What does Mr. Anson want in Alaska?" he inquired with sharp suspicion. His thoughts were busy with his friend's possible danger.

"Mosler," laughed his partner. "He wants Mosler."

"Which is equivalent to the moon," hazarded Alf.

After the supper of hot biscuit, bacon and beans had been consumed with an accompaniment of steaming coffee, Alf listened to the latest development in his partner's fortunes. His expression, during the recital ranged the gamut of amazement, delight, depression.

"I knew that Johnny-B was a gentleman besides being true blue," was Alf's comment. "But I didn't suppose he was the son of a millionaire. He don't look it."

"No, he's in the rough just now," Anson laughed, with a glance at the miner's tanned and bearded cheeks, his uncouth attire and the leanness of a frame wasted by sickness.

"I'm glad and I'm sorry," stated Alf. "We've teamed it together quite a spell. Now, that's bygones."

"Never!" declared David. "As long as we both live you're my Jonathan. Remember that."

Since Anson's business was to produce the long lost heir as quickly as possible the latter arranged for a mid-winter absence. The claims were left entirely in Alf's care. Management would be easy during the slack season of intense frost. Therefore Grant—or, rather, Worthington—started in the detective's care for the familiar scenes of youth. His relation to the wealthy financier seemed a figment of the imagination. Despite his effort to realize the statement he failed to experience a sense of its truth. Instead of calling to fancy the faces of his new found parents he recalled, with joy, the familiar countenances of the judge whose name spelled integrity, of the loving woman who had been to him a mother, of Sadie the cherished sister, even of Herbert for whom he had suffered. But, beyond and above all, clear as a flame, he saw the dark, piquant, smiling face of the girl whose heaven tinted message had saved him, first from despair, then from the bullet of a would-be murderer.

CHAPTER XIII.

At H. R. Worthington's palatial residence uniformed boys in visored caps delivered saffron hued envelopes. Twice.

"The Blood is The Life"

Science has never gone beyond the above simple statement of scripture. But it has illuminated that statement and given it a meaning ever broadening with the increasing breadth of knowledge. When the blood is "bad" or impure it is not alone the body which suffers through disease. The brain is also clouded, the mind and judgement are effected, and many an evil deed or impure thought may be directly traced to the impurity of the blood.

Foul, impure blood can be made pure by the use of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It enriches and purifies the blood thereby curing, pimples, blotches, eruptions and other cutaneous affections, as eczema, tetter, or salt-rheum, hives and other manifestations of impure blood.

In the cure of scrofulous swellings, enlarged glands, open eating ulcers, or old sores, the "Golden Medical Discovery" has performed the most marvelous cures. In cases of old sores, or open eating ulcers, it is well to apply to the open sores Dr. Pierce's All-Healing Salve, which possesses wonderful healing potency when used as an application to the sores in conjunction with the use of "Golden Medical Discovery" as a blood cleansing constitutional treatment. If your druggist don't happen to have the "All-Healing Salve" in stock, you can easily procure it by inclosing fifty cents in postage stamps to Dr. R.V. Pierce, 663 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y., and it will come to you by return post. Most druggists keep it as well as the "Golden Medical Discovery."

You can't afford to accept any medicine of *unknown composition* as a substitute for "Golden Medical Discovery," which is a medicine OF KNOWN COMPOSITION, having a complete list of ingredients in plain English on its bottle-wrapper, the same being attested as correct under oath.

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10 DAYS FREE TRIAL We will ship you a **"RANGER" BICYCLE on approval, freight prepaid** to any place in the United States *without a cent deposit in advance*, and allow **ten days free trial** from the day you receive it. If it does not suit you in every way and is not all or more than we claim for it and a better bicycle than you can get anywhere else regardless of price, or if for any reason whatever you do not wish to keep it, ship it back to us at our expense for freight and you will *not be out one cent*.

LOW FACTORY PRICES We sell the highest grade bicycles direct from factory to rider at **lower prices** than any other house. We save you $10 to $25 middlemen's profit on every bicycle. Highest grade models with Puncture-Proof tires, Imported Roller [illegible] etc., at prices no higher than cheap [illegible] bicycles; also reliable medium [illegible] at **unheard of low prices**.

RIDER AGENTS WANTED [illegible] astonished at the *wonderfully low prices* [illegible] give on the first 1912 sample going to your town. Write at once for our *special offer*.

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SECOND HAND BICYCLES—a limited number taken in trade by our Chicago retail stores will be [illegible] out at once, at **$3 to $8 each.** Descriptive bargain list mailed free.

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It is a positive remedy for all Stomach, Liver and Intestinal Trouble, Gastritis, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Pressure of Gas around the Heart, Sour Stomach, Distress After Eating, Nervousness, Dizziness, Fainting Spells, Constipation, Congested and Torpid Liver, Yellow Jaundice, Sick Headache and Gall Stones.

The above ailments are mainly caused by the clogging of the intestinal tract with **mucoid and catarrhal accretions,** backing up poisonous fluids into the stomach, and otherwise deranging the digestive system. I want every sufferer of any of these diseases to test this wonderful treatment. **You are not asked to take this treatment for a week or two** before you will feel its great benefits—**only one dose is usually required.** I say emphatically it is a positive, permanent remedy and I will prove it to you if you will allow me to. I will send the complete $1.00 treatment to sufferers absolutely **Free** so you can try it in your own home at my expense.

The most eminent specialists declare that 75 per cent of the people who suffer from Stomach Trouble are suffering from **Gall Stones.** I firmly believe that this remedy is the only one in the world that will cure this disease. Sufferers of Stomach and Liver troubles and **Gall Stones** should not hesitate a moment, but send for this **Free** treatment at once. I would be pleased to send you the names of people who state they have been cured of various Stomach ailments and speaking the highest praise of this medicine. Just fill out the Coupon below—let me send you this wonderful treatment together with highly interesting literature, testimonials, etc. Don't suffer with agonizing pains—don't permit a dangerous surgical operation, which gives only temporary relief, when this medicine will permanently help you.

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References.—Mercantile Agencies or State Bank of Chicago

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sometimes thrice, each day the bell summoned a servant who immediately conveyed the dispatch to the great book-lined room where an aged man eagerly devoured the contents. Anson, the paid sleuth, was thus keeping his employer in touch with his every move. Finally there came a double worded message dated in San Francisco that was joyfully repeated over the phone. In response Herbert and Sadie arrived on the scene to discuss the joyful intelligence that David was found. In the Worthington's private sitting-room, where dark red upholstery denied winter blasts and summer heat deluded the occupants into belief in perpetual spring, they found the proud father and the gentle, half-believing mother.

"So Anson located him in Alaska?" Herbert questioned. His pale face was illumined. His voice betrayed intense emotion. "Thank God that he is found!" he said reverently.

"They'll return at once," declared Mr. Worthington. "Anson will wire again when they reach the border. And when they're out of the trail and on board the special he's to use we can time their arrival to a minute. And the night our son arrives will be remembered. We'll give an affair that shall mark an epoch. Our son's home-coming will be celebrated instead of his majority. I tell you the city will never forget the date of my heir's return."

"I hardly think," ventured Sadie, "that David cares for display!"

But Herbert entered heartily into the millionaire's scheme for celebrating his son's return. The two discussed elaborate plans. The best music, flowers, celebrities to entertain, and food that wealth could invoke were to be secured. Notwithstanding Herbert's instrumentality in the banishment of his foster brother, the millionaire felt no resentment, since it was the indirect means of his son's identification and restoration. Instead, both the wealthy financier and his delicate wife, were greatly attracted to Sadie Brackway's erring relative. The young man's natural refinement and social inclinations made him harmonize with the habitues of their set. His pleasure loving, sanguine temperament—toned to unaccustomed gravity by remorse—was especially congenial to Mrs. Worthington who was not of the strong minded class. The young man's impetuous, boy-like manner, his instinctive gallantry appealed to both. Moreover Mr. Worthington had insensibly fallen into the habit of consulting the young lawyer concerning business affairs. In this instance he wished advice and active assistance in preparing a never-to-be-forgotten reception in his son's honor.

Therefore David's return to the city from which he had fled, an outcast, was to be heralded by a costly pageant. Fickle as is the remembrance of urban residents they were fated to long recall the occasion when the Worthington heir came into his own. The city remembered the events of that night longer than a metropolis was ever known to retain sensational happenings. This was not because of the lavish display but for the grim reason that a long buried, entirely forgotten family skeleton stalked abroad among the silk, velvet, and lace-robed throng.

Costly preparations for the Worthington crush—as the occasion was prophetically termed—were set in progress. The ladies of every remembered household determined upon fresh toilets. Sadie was no exception. Long and exhaustive consultations were held with her recently arrived friend from foreign parts.

Ada and her father, after a leisurely and erratic route through India, China and Japan, had crossed the Pacific and the continent to their long vacant home Ada's withheld information regarding the fever victim she had recognized in Africa did nothing toward retarding Anson's discovery. He traced Grant by means of his association with Turner When Ada finally reached a port where she could receive mail she learned all that Sadie could tell. In her delayed correspondence was a full account of Mr Worthington's surmise that the fugitive was his son and the—not overwhelming proof—upon which he based his conclusion. Quickly following on the heels of this was the astounding revelation made by Herbert when he learned that his foster brother was alive. Anson had withdrawn his command regarding secrecy and the entire matter became public. This change of plan was due to the detective's own delight at the news of his prisoner's escape—the man he had instinctively honored. Instead of censure for the erring youth, the press blazoned forth the fact that Mosher, the notorious, had been nearly captured by the son of Judge Brackway. Therefore the all powerful newspapers—able to force war or maintain peace—managed the trend of [illegible]ion. But in his own home Herbert was judged strictly on merit. Judge Brackway knew his act to be that of a weakling. Loving justice as he loved nothing else on earth, the parent scorned the man who had permitted an unjust sacrifice. His theory of heredity was at fault. David had shown himself a prince among men; his own offspring had played the poltroom. Mrs. Brackway had turned from him in utter loathing and refused to have him admitted to her sick-room where she now spent much of her t[illegible] Sadie. [illegible]ng his repent[illegible] and pit[illegible]ef, alone tendered him full f[illegible]

Now she discussed evening gowns with Ada and forgot all but the delightful present. Ada proved to be lacking in ideas on the momentous question. She seemed preoccupied. At times her face burned crimson as if beset with embarrassing memories. Reticence was not, with her, a dominant characteristic but now she avoided all reference to her childhood's playmate.

"I think," hesitated Sadie, "that white chiffon is the proper thing for me. I must not over-dress. You know papa remains at home with poor sick mamma. Her nerves are in a terrible condition. He won't leave the house in case the nurse needs him. I'm to go with Herbert. Something simple is what I need under the circumstances. But you, my dear, can wear silk."

"Since my father is determined to be present," Ada explained, "I believe my pale—blue—is—is—becoming."

"Of course you'll be present," cried Sadie. "Your father is the Worthington's physician. They would never forgive his absence. As for your blue lace it's just ravishing. You know it is, you—you little dissembler."

Carrie Hammond was likewise in the throes of the mantua-making problem. Nor did her somewhat diminutive stature lessen the difficulty. She wavered in mind between the allurements of primrose silk or a gown of pearl white. Finding decision a difficult matter she induced her astonishingly willing brother to convey her to Sadie's presence for confirmation of her opinion.

In the large comfortable Brackway parlor, softly illuminated, tastefully furnished, the momentous question received due consideration.

"I vote for the yellow outfit with orange ribbons," wickedly advised Carrie's brother.

"White," persuaded Sadie. "White with pearls and white carnations."

Herbert, after all, was the one who gave the casting vote.

"Miss Hammond in the latter costume would be irresistible," he declared with an admiring glance at the sweet, piquant, laughing face. "No one would have eyes for the Worthington heir. It would be an act of charity to poor David who hates public notice."

"Then," flashed her brother, "the yellow outfit would be charity twice blessed." But Herbert's decision was final.

Captain Hammond found little in the topic under consideration to interest him. A quiet corner with Sadie would have been more acceptable. Since the memorable day when he accidentally revealed the fact of David Grant's enlistment and existence, no opportunity had been offered for a renewal of his interrupted suit.

But that evening while the girls decided the question of dress he determined upon a plan whereby his uncertainty would end. The manner of this adjustment, like all brilliant conceptions, was simple in detail. The time of enactment was to be the fateful evening of the famous reception.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the far North Anson, with his guides and sledges, was conveying his precious charge over frozen rivers, ice fields and mountain defiles where the entire party was obliged to scramble to the lower plain. Ten days of this near-Arctic experience, then a ride on by-roads to the main line ending with the contrasting comfort of a special coach.

Aboard the onrushing, smoke-vomiting train Grant and Anson covered the exact route, over the Rockies and on to the Great Lakes, that Grant and Alf had traveled many months before. The elder partner now thought of the young man left to guard their mining interests. He marveled at fate combining two destinies from remote regions of their commonwealth. Chance had brought them together at the moment when each sorely needed the other. Chance now separated them on the eve of unbelievable fortune. Grant sighed as he recalled Alf's lonely figure standing on the white plain of snow-covered Alaska and the youth's parting words.

"I ain't no knocker, Johnny-B," he declared, "but I don't like this millionaire [illegible]ness. It takes away your appetite for gold digging and spoils our fun. I don't wish you no bad luck, nor nothing like that, but, by jolly, I'd give all the gold we've dug to have you back m[illegible]d crazy than ever."

"[illegible] you never noticed any of th[illegible] personal ads," commented Anson when the two were across the Michigan bord[illegible] southward. He indicated [illegible] newspaper pointedly addressed to the wanderer.

"Nothing queer about it," denied the f[illegible] I [illegible] but few papers and I n[illegible] the advertising columns. What seems more visionary to me is this whole affair of parentage. I am, of course, glad to own a legal surname," he admitted as he mentally projected his plans to the moment of marriage, "but I can't real[illegible] that I'm it in the fairy st[illegible]ow I don't fit the part."

"[illegible]," [illegible] Anson, "and very [illegible]n, too, for here's our destina[illegible]"

[illegible] contained Herbert [illegible] Worthington. The vehicles had just arrived as the express [illegible] from the flats above the city. Herbert was the first to reach the vestibule and greet the man who had been in every sense "his brother's keeper."

"David, my more than brother," the young lawyer faltered. He crushed extended hands in passionate clasp. His tear-blinded eyes dimly saw the athletic form of the man bronzed by exposure. A man modernly clad and clean shaven excepting the heavy mustache. The strong features, aged by vicissitudes of fortune, were handsome with the perfectly chiseled beauty of mature manhood. The level earnest gaze that met his own questioning glance was devoid of resentment, was kindly. "How can I ever repay?" cried Herbert. "How can I express my gratitude, my self-loathing?"

"You're square; not another word," ordered his foster brother. "Good has resulted. We'll bury the past. Now, you take care of Anson. Take him up town in your motor. I see that my—Mr. Worthington, waits for me. I'll see you later."

The next moment David had crossed to the enclosed vehicle where the millionaire wished to greet his son.

The meeting was not for public gaze. Disappointed journalists surrounded the spot but no eagle eyed reporter was admitted to the scene that ensued behind the glass doors of the moving vehicle.

At the Brackway residence the motor stopped beneath the glare of an incandescent. Immediately David stepped from the door held ajar by the footman. With light tread he crossed the pavement, the small lawn now frost-withered, and entered the familiar portal. Despite the nearness of the hour—as explained to him by Mr. Worthington—when he was to be presented to the millionaire's friends he determined to see his foster parents and sister. The wide hall was deserted. He passed through the library with its wealth of reference books on law, then into the study where Judge Brackway scanned obscure legal pharses by a drop light. His massive iron gray head was bent above the tome, his broad white brow was furrowed by troubled thought. Then the weight of a firm hand on his shoulder caused him to glance up, to start to his feet.

"My friend," David said with a hand claps. "The best friend ever gained by an outcast!"

The judge gazed admiringly at the weather hardened man before him, stamped deeply with the personality of strong character.

"You're the ideal man, David," spoke the judge with emotion. "Would to God I had such a son!"

Sadie, who struggled with an exacting toilet, threw on a silken robe when she heard the opening of the front door and descended the stair. She was in time to meet David as he emerged from the library and the two exchanged joyful greetings as she was folded in his arms.

"It was just like you, Davie, to give us a chance to see you before the big reception. It's going to be an awful crush, you hero, and I'm sure you deserve it. Yes, you do," she repeated laughing at his look of whimsical distress. "But, oh, the trouble arraying one's self in glad attire. I've been at it an hour and never before longed for a maid. But mamma is anxious to see you; come," she invited.

The invalid, clothed in some soft material of black, lay in her softly lighted room on a couch. Her brown eyes glowed with feverish light. A hectic flush tinted her usually pale face as she half rose to embrace the man who knelt at her side.

"My boy, my poor David," she murmured then, for the third time quietly swooned sinking back among her pillows.

"It's nothing," Mrs. Taggart declared, stepping forward and taking charge of her patient. "This has been too much for the dear. She's terribly nervous today. That's all. So just leave us alone and I'll have her settled for the night."

"Mamma has grieved for your absence. Now she finds, in your safe return more joy than she can bear," Sadie explained, as the two retraced their steps to the lower hall. "But don't worry. Joy is an excellent tonic."

After taking temporary leave of his foster sister, David made yet another call. This time he ran up the stone steps of the next door residence owned by Dr. Carroll. The patiently waiting auto moved forward to the side of the doctor's big car always ready for instant call. Ada's maid threw wide the door of the doctor's residence at David's ring. Divining who asked admittance and being intelligent, discreet and shrewd, she replied to his question.

"Yes, Miss Carroll is at home. She is in the music room. Will you see her there or shall—?"

This capital story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming year many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It only costs you $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

The Rejected.

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So we are going to re[illegible] this offer, and [illegible] ing so at a big [illegible] ing droves of new customers [illegible] satisfied patrons. Here is the offer that created the big sensation of the year in whiskey trade circles.

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LACKLAND DIST. COMPANY, Mail Dept. E ST. LOUIS, MO.

Justine Sprague, Actress.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

"Whom are you going to wed?"

"Donald Mainard, a brother of my late friend, the girl who was drowned."

If a bombshell had burst in their midst Justine could not have been more surprised. But on second thought she did not believe the assertion; she felt that Rachel saw the game was up, and wanted to mislead them—anything to obviate their thinking she had ever turned her eyes toward Alston and his wealth. Evidently she did not dream that Justine had recently refused the suit of the man she had announced herself about to wed. But Justine made no comment, and Rachel changed the subject.

In the evening Alston came, and seeing Justine at home, sitting in the family circle as if she had never left it, he forgot the years between them, his dignity, Rachel's and his mother's presence—everything, and then and there took her in his arms and kissed her. To him she was the little girl he had worshiped, and he was happy now that she had returned.

Rachel slipped away unnoticed. It was a sight that did not appeal to her. And she, in her turn, began to think of flight. If only she might get away from Lakeview before she was obliged to witness their wedded happiness. Or before the Spragues had a chance to learn her treachery!

Yet how could they learn of it if Justine did not inform them, and Justine herself did not know, and would not betray her if she did. And Rose, in whom she had confided, was dead. No, she was afraid, but she would leave as soon as she could find an excuse for doing so. She had paved the way when she saw Justine had returned, by declaring her betrothal. She had not meant to marry Don until that moment. The truth was, she had met and known him when he first came from the West. Rose had introduced him, and they had got acquainted, and quite friendly. And later, when he returned to the city, after his sister's demise, she had by chance met him again. They had a long talk over Rose's sad fate, and in a moment of recklessness he had asked her to marry him. She put him off at the time, not intending to accept him till the moment of Justine's return. Then she saw a way out of the dilemma, and decided quickly in his favor. She would marry him just to prove she never expected anything more of the family she had made her home with so long.

They should never know now, she determined; Rose Mainard was dead and her lips sealed. She could never betray her. Somehow, she regretted her death less when she remembered she had been foolish enough to confide everything to her—her hopes, her aspirations and the treacherous, underhanded manner in wihch she had driven Justine from her home.

Could she have known that in the letter reposing in Justine's satchel as yet unread by her was a detailed account of that confidence, and that it was the revenge Rose had taken for slights she had received as Rachel began to see to what depths the girl was sinking. If she had but known!

CHAPTER XII.
RETRIBUTION.

Mrs. Sprague also left the room while Alston still held Justine in his arms. And seeing that they were left alone together he took advantage of the opportunity to declare his love.

"You will never leave us again, Justine?" he said, unconsciously repeating his mother's very words. "I could not bear it!"

"I will never leave you again, Alston, nor mother."

"Ah, she shall be your mother, indeed, as she is mine. For you will be my wife, darling? Answer me, little one! I love you! You know it. You must have always known it."

"You were always good to me, Alston," she said, trying to draw away her hand, "you were the best of brothers."

He held her off at arm's length, unheeding her blushing face, and gazed into her eyes, the eyes that at first were inclined to droop, but at last were shyly raised to his face.

"You would never acknowledge that I was your brother; that must be because you were always my sweetheart. At any rate, I am your lover now, and I want you for my wife. Will you marry me, Justine? I think I shall still be good to you."

"Oh, I am sure of it!" breathed the girl ecstatically. And—well, the reader must come away. He has really seen enough to guess at what followed.

They both looked very demure when Mrs. Sprague and Rachel entered the room a little later. But Alston announced their betrothal proudly, and the two women embraced Justine. Rachel's smiles were forced; and she knew her rival recognized their lack of genuineness. But there was no help for it. She had played a losing game, she must accept her defeat with the best grace possible. It was not Justine she had struggled with, it was Fate and the battle was an unequal one. She could not conquer Fate.

Later that evening, when Justine was unpacking her effects, she came across the letter Rose Mainard had written and placed in the hands of her friends, and which had been forwarded with the answer to her own letter to them.

"Of course we never read it," Alston said, when she brought it into the parlor where he and his mother sat together making plans for the future, "though we wondered much what the communication might be."

"I will read it aloud," replied the girl. And opening the missive, she began the perusal of Rose's message to her. Rachel was about to enter the parlor when Justine began to read, but hearing her name read from the letter, she paused behind the draperies of the aperture and waited. There she remained till the paper that told of her plot to oust Justine from her home and marry Alston for his wealth was read to the end. It was a plain tale, told without any garnishing, and it made Rachel Raynor's soul naked to her friends.

It was the truth, but told in a way that would open their eyes to her perfidy. And she knew as she stood and listened, scarcely daring to breathe lest they should discover her presence, that the letter contained facts they would not be slow to recognize as such, and that all the waters of the Mississippi could not wash her clean in their eyes after this disclosure. And never again would she have the courage to face them.

As Justine finished reading Alston rose to his feet anger and astonishment stamped on his face.

"Send for Rachel, mother," he said. "We will see if this thing is true, if she was at the bottom of Justine's action when she left us. The letter of course was written for spite, but it seems to contain truth. We shall know from her manner when we question her. Let her refute it if she can."

"Ask Justine," suggested his mother, motioning toward the girl, whose face betrayed that all the charges in the letter were true.

"Did Rachel lead you to think she was betrothed to me, and that you were an unwelcome interloper whom we kept out of pity?" asked Alston, taking his mother's advice. Justine looked at him appealingly, not wishing to answer or to refuse. Alston saw her predicament, and turning, he touched a bell which brought a servant to the door.

"Send Miss Raynor to me," he said. "I wish to speak with her."

"Miss Raynor has retired," explained the maid when she returned a little later. "She will see you in the morning."

But when the morning came Rachel did not make her appearance. And upon investigation it was found that she was missing. Like Justine she had taken her departure in the night, but without leaving even a note to explain her conduct. They rightly guessed that she had been within hearing when Justine read the letter penned by Rose Mainard before her tragic death.

They never heard from her again, and the only thing they learned concerning her was that she went West and joined her lot with that of Donald Mainard. In fact, it developed that they went together.

No one noticed that the departure of both Rachel and the brother of Rose Mainard, her one-time chum, was sudden and unexpected, except the Spragues, until the police found the corpse of Bruce Barrington in the river at the very place from which they took the body of poor, erring Rose.

There was unmistakable evidence that murder had been done. But the coroner's jury decided that, though he came to his death by violence, it was at the hands of some person or persons unknown. Bruce Barrington had been strangled before being thrown into the river, for there were finger marks about the throat. But the purpose was not robbery, for the contents of the pockets were unmolested. Only one man, Alex Harvey, an old friend of Donald Mainard's, guessed at the true facts. Even Rachel never knew she was wedded to a murderer, though her life with this man was punishment enough for her treachery. She received her just dues as she went along. It was a more petty punishment, although more prolonged than the retribution which had overtaken Rose Mainard and her betrayer, Bruce Barrington.

Donald Mainard did not escape the fate of the wrong-doer. He grew morose and brooding, and thought to drown his remorse in strong drink. And thus Rachel, while repenting her hasty action in trying to prove an indifference to Alston she did not feel by wedding one who really cared nothing for her, and for whom she certainly did not care, reaped a harvest of sorrow. And as if to make the punishment more complete she read of the wedding of Alston Sprague to Justine, the girl she had tried so hard by underhanded means to supplant.

Any one seeing the happiness and contentment at Lakeview, where the three congenial souls dwelt in harmony together, would never dream of the heartaches and silent yearnings these three had once known, all because of one woman's treacherous scheming—scheming which recoiled on herself like a boomerang, and brought to her, as another kind of treachery had brought to her late friend, the love-pirate, and her paramour—a just retribution.

The end.

* * *

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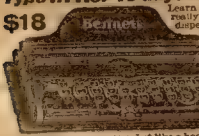

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The Specter Bridegroom.

(Continued from page five.)

and noble, what must have been the living man. She filled the house with lamentations.

On the night of the second day of her widowhood, she had retired to her chamber, accompanied by one of her aunts, who insisted on sleeping with her. The aunt, who was one of the best tellers of ghost stories in all Germany, had just been recounting one of her longest, and had fallen asleep in the very midst of it. The chamber was remote, and overlooked a small garden. The niece lay pensively gazing at the beams of the rising moon, as they trembled on the leaves of an aspen tree before the lattice. The castle clock had just told midnight, when a soft strain of music stole up from the garden. She rose hastily from her bed and stepped lightly to the window. A tall figure stood among the shadows of the trees. As it raised its head, a beam of moonlight fell upon the countenance. Heaven and earth! she beheld the Specter Bridegroom! A loud shriek at that moment burst upon her ear, and her aunt, who had been awakened by the music, and had followed her silently to the window, fell into her arms. When she looked again, the specter had disappeared.

Of the two females, the aunt now required the most soothing, for she was perfectly beside herself with terror. As to the young lady, there was something, even in the specter of her lover, that seemed endearing. There was still the semblance of manly beauty; and though the shadow of a man is but little calculated to satisfy the affections of a love-sick girl, yet, where the substance is not to be had, even that is consoling. The aunt declared she would never sleep in that chamber again; the niece, for once, was refractory, and declared as strongly that she would sleep in no other in the castle; the consequence was that she had to sleep in it alone; but she drew a promise from her aunt not to relate the story of the specter, lest she should be denied the only melancholy pleasure left her on earth—that of inhabiting the chamber over which the guardian shade of her lover kept its nightly vigils.

How long the good old lady would have observed this promise is uncertain, for she dearly loved to talk of the marvelous, and there is a triumph in being the first to tell a frightful story; it is, however, still quoted in the neighborhood, as a memorable instance of female secrecy, that she kept it to herself for a whole week; when she was suddenly absolved from all further restraint by intelligence brought to the breakfast-table one morning that the young lady was not to be found. Her room was empty—the bed had not been slept in—the window was open—and the bird had flown!

The astonishment and concern with which the intelligence was received can only be imagined by those who have witnessed the agitation which the mishaps of a great man cause among his friends. Even the poor relations paused for a moment from the indefatigable labors of the trencher; when the aunt, who had at first been struck speechless, wrung her hands and shrieked out "The goblin! the goblin! She's carried away by the goblin!"

In a few words she related the fearful scene of the garden, and concluded that the specter must have carried off his bride. Two of the domestics corroborated the opinion, for they had heard the clattering of a horse's hoofs down the mountain about midnight, and had no doubt that it was the specter on his black charger, bearing her away to the tomb. All present were struck with the direful probability; for events of the kind are extremely common in Germany, as many well-autheticated histories bear witness.

What a lamentable situation was that of the poor Baron! What a heartrending dilemma for a fond father, and a member of the great family of Katzenellenbogen! His only daughter had either been rapt away to the grave, or he was to have some wood-demon for a son-in-law, and, perchance, a troop of goblin grandchildren. As usual, he was completely bewildered, and all the castle in an uproar. The men were ordered to take horse and scour every road and path and glen of the Odenwald. The Baron himself had just drawn on his jack-boots, girded on his sword, and was about to mount his steed to sally forth on the doubtful quest, when he was brought to a pause by a new apparition. A lady was seen approaching the castle, mounted on a palfrey attended by a cavalier on horseback. She galloped up to the gate, sprang from her horse, and falling at the Baron's feet, embraced his knees. It was his lost daughter, and her companion—the Specter Bridegroom! The Baron was astonished. He looked at his daughter, then at the specter, and almost doubted the evidence of his senses. The latter, too, was wonderfully improved in his appearance, since his visit to the world of spirits. His dress was splendid, and set off a noble figure of manly symmetry. He was no longer pale and melancholy. His fine countenance was flushed with the glow of youth, and joy rioted in his large dark eye.

The mystery was soon cleared up. The cavalier (for, in truth, as you must have known all the while, he was no goblin) announced himself as Sir Herman Von Starkenfaust. He related his adventure with the young Count. He told how he has hastened to the castle to deliver the unwelcome tidings, but that the eloquence of the Baron had interrupted him in every attempt to tell his tale. How the sight of the bride had completely captivated him, and that to pass a few hours near her he had tacitly suffered the mistake to continue. How he had been sorely perplexed in what way to make a decent retreat, until the Baron's goblin stories had suggested his eccentric exit. How, fearing the feudal hostility of the family, he had repeated his visits by stealth—had haunted the garden beneath the young lady's window—had wooed—had won—had borne away in triumph—and, in a word, had wedded the fair.

Under any other circumstances the Baron would have been inflexible, for he was tenacious of paternal authority and devoutly obstinate in all family feuds; but he loved his daughter; he had lamented her as lost; he rejoiced to find her still alive; and, though her husband was of a hostile house, yet, thank Heven, he was not a goblin. There was something, it must be acknowledged, that did not exactly accord with his notions of strict veracity, in the joke the knight had passed upon him of his being a dead man; but several old friends present, who had served in the wars, assured him that every stratagem was excusable in love, and that the cavalier was entitled to especial privilege, having lately served as a trooper.

Matters, therefore, were happily arranged. The Baron pardoned the young couple on the spot. The revels at the castle were resumed. The poor relations overwhelmed this new member of the family with loving kindness; he was so gallant, so generous—and so rich. The aunts, it is true, were somewhat scandalized that their system of strict seclusion, and passive obedience, should be so badly exemplified, but attributed it all to their negligence in not having the windows grated. One of them was particularly mortified at having her marvelous story marred, and that the only specter she had ever seen should turn out a counterfeit; but the niece seemed perfectly happy at having found him substantial flesh and blood—and so the story ends.

Next week "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," a strange story by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Read it.

* * *

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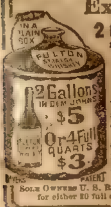

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LIVE STORIES for BOYS

Tony Tripp's Adventures;

Or, THE BOYS FROM ALLABACK'S

By Capt. Hugh Hamilton

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Begun in No. 10, March 11. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

ENCOUNTERS AN OLD FOE.

That Jasper Bates wanted the watch that belonged to Evan Bates, and how Tony himself took the watch and gave it to Bates, has already been told. Also, [illegible] Tony encountered Sam O'Dell at the home of the Moores and defeated him in his wicked object, is known to the reader.

QUITE late on the afternoon of the day that followed Tony's adventure with Sam O'Dell at the home of the Moores, an old man entered the office of Mr. Shell, the Government inspector. That official was absent and Tony was the only [illegible] of the place.

The visitor looked like a man of 70, for he [illegible] to lean heavily on a cane. His [illegible] and Tony wondered what could have brought him to the inspector's office.

"You're alone, I see," said the old man in a drawling tone, as [illegible] Tony.

"Mr. Shell is out just now."

"Yes? Will he be gone long?"

Tony glanced at the memorandum on the inspector's desk and said that his employer would be back within an hour.

"I'll just wait," was the reply, and the speaker settled back in a chair and stretched out his feet. Tony turned to some work and ceased to regard him.

The boy from Allaback's had his head full of his adventure in the office of [illegible] & O'Dell, where he had chanced upon his uncle before the steel safe. He remembered the woe-begone face which Jasper Sharp had turned upon him, and he knew that his relative was in the power of his wicked partner.

Once Tony glanced at the man in the office chair and noticed that his head had fallen upon his bosom and he was apparently fast asleep.

This circumstance would have thrown Tony entirely off his guard if he had not accidentally noticed the man's hands.

They were not the hands of a man of 70, they were too fresh and fair skinned for that, and Tony, leaning forward, saw that the nails were well manicured.

There was something wrong with the man.

Pretending to be engrossed with his office duties, Tony made out to watch his visitor closely.

All at once the man made a movement and rose to his feet.

"Won't you wait for Mr. Shell?" said the boy.

"I'm afraid he won't come back soon."

"His time is almost up and he is one of the most punctual men you ever saw."

"What's his business out?"

"That is Mr. Shell's concern, not mine," answered Tony.

"You run errands for him, don't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Therefore, you should know something about his affairs."

"He's a Government officer, you know."

"Yes, he's connected with the customs service."

"An inspector, if you please."

By this time the man stood very close to Tony who leaned slightly against the table and was looking up into a pair of very black and twinkling eyes.

He now felt that the fellow had not come to the office for any good.

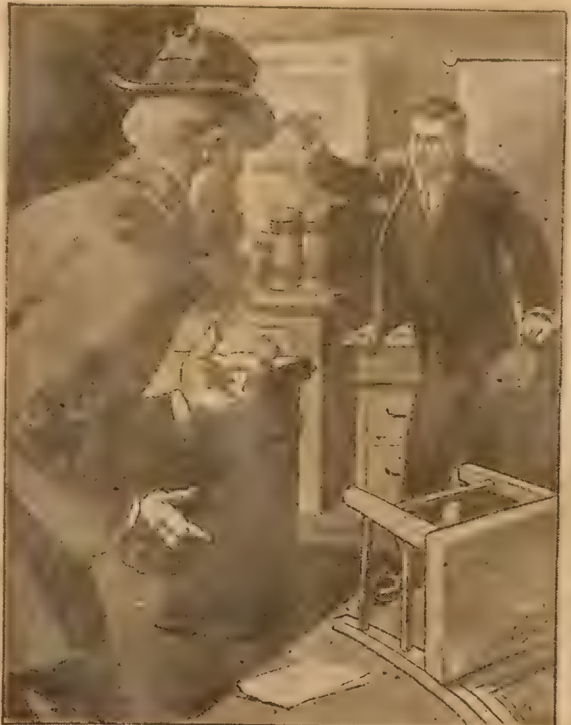
"You've been poking yourself into other people's business," suddenly blurted the man.

"Sir?" cried the startled Tony.

"I mean just what I've said," the stranger continued. "You are one of Uncle Sam's little spies."

The boy slid around the table and reached his desk in one corner of the room. The man came after him with the tread of a wild beast and the boy noticed that his hands were now clinched till the veins shone through the clear skin.

With a quick movement Tony threw up the lid of the desk and his hand gripped a revolver that reposed beneath it. His movement was sudden enough to bring the man to a halt.



"Go back to your chair and sit down!"

"Go back to your chair and sit down," commanded the boy from Allaback's.

The strange man did not stir but glared at the boy with all eyes.

"Sit down till Mr. Shell comes back," continued Tony, showing the weapon in a manner which caught the man's gaze.

"See here, boy, you wouldn't make use of that weapon?" he suddenly growled.

"It all depends on what you do," was the retort. "Take the chair you've just left. When Mr. Shell comes in you can transact your business with him."

Biting his lower lip till it grew crimson, the man hustled back to the chair and dropped sullenly into it. He looked across the space that separated him from Tony Tripp but did not speak. As for the boy, he leaned against the desk with the revolver in his hand.

Not a word fell between them.

Half an hour passed and yet Mr. Shell did not return.

"You don't intend to keep me here till night?" said the man speaking at last.

"You shall remain where you are till my employer comes back."

"He may not come back tonight."

"Then, sir, you shall remain here till morning."

A harsh word dropped from the stranger's tongue.

"You're just treasuring up trouble," said he, still eyeing Tony. "In the first place, you don't know whom you're dealing with."

"I know that your mission here is for no good," answered the boy. "Your hands give you away. I've been noticing them for some time. Old men don't, as a rule, take such good care of their hands."

The listener glanced down at his hands and seemed to wince.

"If you will promise not to interfere with our business any more," he said, "we'll call it quits."

"What is your business?" asked Tony.

"I mean that if you will leave Mr. Shell's employ you'll get rid of a lot of trouble."

"You might as well save your breath in that direction," was the prompt answer.

"Very well. You will have to put up with what comes."

Another ten minutes passed.

"I guess I'll go," said the man in the

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chair, making a movement as if he were about to carry out his intention.

"Don't be in a hurry," replied Tony and the revolver once more covered the fellow's head. "I'm sure Mr. Shell will soon be here."

"I'm not particular about seeing him now."

"But he may be pleased to see you."

The man settled back in the chair and gave Tony another look.

All at once footsteps came down the outside hallway and Tony's heart gave joyous leap in his bosom.

The door opened and Mr. Shell came in.

As the inspector took off his hat and moved towards his desk he spied Tony's prisoner.

"This man called to see you, Mr. Shell," said the boy still holding the weapon.

The Government officer turned upon the man.

"Well, sir," said he, "what can I do for you?"

'Nothing just now, I believe. I'll call another time."

At the same moment he shot a rapid glance towards Tony who did not speak.

"I'm at leisure, sir," resumed Mr. Shell, crossing his legs. "I believe you have not given your name."

"Oh, that's not necessary," was the answer. "My business can wait, Mr. Shell," and with this he moved towards the door.

"Wait a moment!" called out the clear voice of the boy from Allaback's and the man stopped in the middle of the room.

Tony executed a sudden movement and got between his caller and the door.

Mr. Shell stared at the boy wondering what his movement meant.

"Take off your beard!" commanded Tony.

There was no movement of the hands of the one addressed and the [illegible] stare increased.

"Mr. Shell, that beard is false," said Tony to his employer. "That man came hither for no good. He has called me a spy and wanted to make me a traitor to your interests."

"Is that true, sir?"

The voice of Mr. Shell was harsh and stern and he was looking the accused one fairly in the face.

"You will obey the boy," he went on. "If the beard you wear is false you will remove it."

There was a muttered growl on the man's part and his hand went slowly towards his face. In another instant the beard had been withdrawn and was clutched in his hands.

"Just as I expected!" cried Tony. "It is Mr. Jerrold."

"And, who, pray, is Jerrold?" asked the inspector.

"The man who trapped me on the train when I came to the city from Allaback's."

"Well, Mr. Jerrold, since you are unmasked you will please remain a little longer."

Mr. Shell turned to the telephone on his desk and rang at once. A sudden paleness overspread Jerrold's face.

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" cried he, springing to his feet, with the rage of a wild animal. "I am armed too!" and a revolver flashed suddenly in his hand. "Stand back, both of you! Don't call the police, Mr. Shell. And don't precipitate matters."

He backed towards the door with the weapon in front of him and Tony and his employer could only stare at the man's audacity.

"I'll see you again—perhaps," he continued. And the kid yonder can rest assured that we're not through with him."

With this the man jerked the door open with one hand while he gripped the revolver with the other and within another second he was gone.

Mr. Shell and Tony heard him stamping down the corridor and the rumble of the descending elevator reached their ears.

"That's a cool fellow," commented the inspector as he looked at Tony. "He's playing a desperate game of some sort."

"Yes, but he couldn't face the call for the police," laughed the boy from Allaback's.

"Oh," was the reply, "he'll not be hard to pick up when wanted since we know his name. He had no business with me, Tony."

'No, his business was wholly with me," answered Tony Tripp. "I had him under the revolver's muzzle for nearly an hour and then is when I figured out that he must be Jerrold, Mr. Chalk's partner."

"Watch out for him," advised the inspector. "These men are really dangerous. But you seem able to take care of yourself, Tony."

"I'll never call for assistance till I find that I am not," was the response which met with Mr. Shell's approval for he nodded smilingly and turned to his desk as if nothing exciting had just happened.

Tony went back to his duties which would soon terminate for the day, but he could not dismiss from his mind his last adventure with Jerrold, the desperate city sharp.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. GREEN'S "FRIEND."

"Tony," cried Billy Bates as he burst into the room in De Koven street shortly after our hero had reached it after his adventure with Jerrold in the inspector's office, "I have again run across our old neighbor Tobias Green."

Tony reflected a moment.

"You remember saving Mr. Green from the clutches of Jerrold and Chalk when they were pretending to guide him to a hotel after his arrival in the city?"

"Certainly. Is the old gentleman here yet?"

"Yes. He says he likes the city so well that he talks of remaining and not going back to Jersey."

"What is he doing?"

"He's opened a little notion store down on Albany street. You know his nephew had a store of that kind in Perkshire near the station."

'So he had," said Tony. "But Mr. Green will find it hard sledding in New York."

"He's put about all his capital in the venture and says that he has some backing besides. He's rented the upper room over the store to a man who limps."

"What?" cried Tony with a sudden start. "A man who limps? Mr. Chalk has a lame leg."

"And so has the man who robbed the Moores of the pawn ticket, you remember?"

Tony did remember.

"So the lame man is backing Mr. Greene?"

"Yes."

"Did you see the backer?"

"No," answered Billy. "Tobias thinks he is just the man for the money," as he expresses it.

"There's something behind all this, Billy," Tony remarked slowly. "Tobias Green is being worked by the sharpers. The old man has a good deal of money and they are after it. I should hate to see him fleeced."

"Well it's his own look out," replied Billy.

"That's one way to look at it, Billy. I would like to get a glimpse of the man in the room over Mr. Greene's store."

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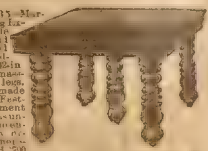

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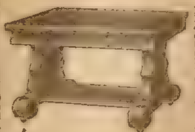

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It was promptly decided that the boys should go down town and "spy out the land," as Billy said. Tobias Green was an unsophisticated individual who could easily be imposed upon by city sharks and Tony did not doubt that he had fallen into the clutches of a gang to which such men as Chalk, Jerrold and Sam O'Dell belonged.

Night had fallen when the pair set out for the little store. They found Tobias in the place all alone, sitting behind his counter waiting for a customer. His stock in trade was small and the shelves looked as if he had sold nothing since he opened up.

He greeted the boys warmly and was glad to see them.

"Trade is dull so far, but it will come my way soon," he said with a smile. "I've got the only store of the kind in the neighborhood and Mr. Jenkins says I'm all right."

"Who is Mr. Jenkins?" inquired Tony.

"He's the man who lives overhead," was the reply. "He's one of the shrewdest men you ever saw, knows all about the city and is willing to back me for any sum."

"How did you first run across him?"

"Met him accidentally in the park. He could live among the millionaires if he cared to but he prefers a quiet place all to himself."

"You've put a good deal of money in the store, Mr. Green?"

"Yes, some. I'm going to sell my farm in Jersey and branch out a little stiffer. Mr. Jenkins is going to negotiate the sale and I've given him power of attorney, that is, he has the right to transact the whole business and will pay the purchase money over to me when he gets it."

The boys exchanged quick glances.

"Don't you think you've put to much trust in Mr. Jenkins?" asked Tony.

"Oh, no," was the answer. "He's honest from the ground up. Such a nice man, got good Jersey blood in his veins."

Tony was nonplused for a moment. Such innocence as was shown on the part of Tobias Green startled him.

"I think," he said at last, "that you could have sold your farm through another party just as well. What if your confidence in Mr. Jenkins should be misplaced?"

"It's impossible, boy. Don't I know that he's straight and honest?"

"Did he tell you so? You've never investigated?"

"It wasn't necessary. Mr. Jenkins brought a friend in the other day and he vouched for him."

"What was the friend's name?"

"I believe Mr. Jenkins called him Chalk."

Both boys laughed to themselves.

"So Mr. Chalk vouched for Mr. Jenkins?"

"Yes, he said he was one of the best men in New York and that was enough for me."

"I should like to see your friend Mr. Jenkins," observed Tony.

Just then footsteps were heard on a stairway which led to the room overhead and Mr. Green smiled.

"That's Mr. Jenkins now," said he. "He goes out every night to meet some of the rich financiers of the city. He generally drops in to pass the time of night."

A man entered the store at that moment and the two boys noticed him at once.

He was a good looking individual, well dressed and he limped a little as he came forward.

He did not observe the boys till he was nearly beside them. He spoke pleasantly to Tobias Green who returned the salutation and looked triumphantly at Tony and Billy.

"Just dropped in to say a word, Mr. Green," said the man. "The board of directors have a night meeting and my presence is needed."

"Which one of your boards is it, Mr. Jenkins?" inquired Tobias.

"It's the board of directors of the American Security Company," was the lofty reply. "We are making a loan of a few millions and have other financial matters to discuss. A very important meeting, as you will observe, Tobias."

"Oh," said Mr. Green, "I thought perhaps it was the bank board."

"No, it met last night and tomorrow I meet the directors of the Kimberly Mines."

With these remarks Mr. Jenkins sauntered out.

"That's the man!" cried Tobias Green. "Don't you see he has his hands full? He's very rich and there's no telling how many great schemes he has on the string."

The surprise of the two chums was complete.

"We'll drop in again," said Tony. "Just now we have a little matter to attend to."

Tobias was left to himself while the two boys hurried away.

"We'll see about this directors' meeting, "Tony said to Billy. "Tobias is in the snare for certain. These rascals will have every cent of his money if they are not prevented."

Jenkins was not yet out of sight and, being agile and secretive, it was not a difficult matter for the boys to follow him.

They kept him in sight despite the press of people on the streets and presently saw him dart into the stairway that led to the quarters of Jerrold and Chalk.

"Birds of a feather!" cried Billy Bates. "Back to the old nest. Now if Mr. Green could be here he might change his opinion of the wealthy and nice Mr. Jenkins."

The boys dared not follow Jenkins any further than the sidewalk, so they drew off. In the course of an hour Jenkins tripped out of the building and walked away, tracked as before.

This time he made his way to the park where he seated himself and took a cigar from his case.

Not far off stood two policemena who had already observed Jenkins and Tony and Billy stole towards them and sat down.

Tony remembered that one of the patrolmen was a person who had given Mr. Shell, the inspector, some valuable information but a few days before and when he was alone he went forward.

"I'm in Mr. Shell's office," said Tony, looking up into the officer's faces.

"Oh, yes, I remember you," was the reply. "Does Mr. Shell want me?"

"No, sir, but if you don't mind to give me a little information I'd like to bother you."

"What is it, my boy?"

Tony glanced towards the satisfied Jenkins who was enjoying his smoke and turned again to the policeman.

"It's about the man on the settee yonder, captain."

"'Reddy' Jenkins, eh?"

"Yes, but I never heard his nick name before."

"Oh, Reddy's a shrewd one. We'd like to land him, but it's hard to find anything tangible against him."

"What does he do?"

"Oh, he fleeces about every countryman he comes across. Jenkins understands the business, I tell you. What is he up to now?"

"He's going to sell a farm in Jersey for an old man who came to the city from Jersey."

"And put all the money in his own pockets."

"There's no doubt of that."

The officer was interested from the start and drew Tony to one side.

"Now give me the whole lay out," said he and our young hero was not slow to comply.

"So that's what 'Reddy' is up to?" cried the policeman. "He's got partners, of course."

"Yes, two men called Jerrold and Chalk."

"A beautiful trio to be sure," with a little laugh.

"And I'm sure the man who robbed a widow and her daughter of their pawn ticket."

"Got down to robbery, has he? Well, he's been going some of late."

By this time another man had joined Jenkins on the park bench and Tony uttered a cry.

"The new man is Sam O'Dell!" said he, giving the officer a quick glance.

"Two of a kind, no doubt," was the reply. "If you will notice, boy, you will see a bush just back of the settee. Do you think yould could get behind it and enjoy their conversation?"

"I can try," said Tony, confidently.

"Then do so and when they are through I'll hear your report."

With this the boy from Allaback's slipped away and began to move cautiously towards the designated shrubbery.

CHAPTER XV.

TWO BOYS AND A CAT.

"How are matters progressing?" were the first words Tony heard from the bench. They were spoken by Sam O'Dell.

"Everything is as fine as silk," was the reply.

"The old jay is still in the dark?"

"Completey so. He thinks I'm just the proper caper. I'm going over to Jersey in a few days to sell the farm."

"Yes. You know our agreement? I'm to take over the place and we'll divide."

"Yes, Sam. I've got the whole thing in hands and when old Green wakes up he'll know more about humanity than he does now. By the way, are you bothered any more by those people on Pineapple street?"

"The widow and her girl? No, I'm not pestered any more by them and I don't intend to be."

This was not all the conversation that rewarded Tony's trick and when the two occupants of the bench had gone he went back to the policeman.

"Just as I suspected," said that individual. "They're both old birds ready to dip their beaks into anything."

"But they'll rob old man Green of his little home."

"Not if you and I can prevent, boy," was the retort. "Sam O'Dell is in partnership with Mr. Jasper Sharp, isn't he?"

"And Jasper Sharp is my uncle who is wholly in the power of the scoundrel."

"I see."

"If he could break loose from Sam O'Dell he would surely lead an honest life."

"It's a pity that such men have a skeleton in their closets," remarked the officer before Tony left him.

Receiving a promise that Jenkins would be looked after, Tony and Billy left the park. O'Dell and Jenkins had

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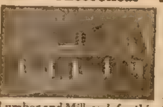

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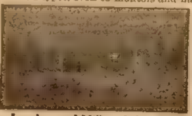

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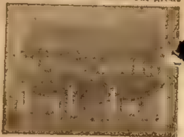

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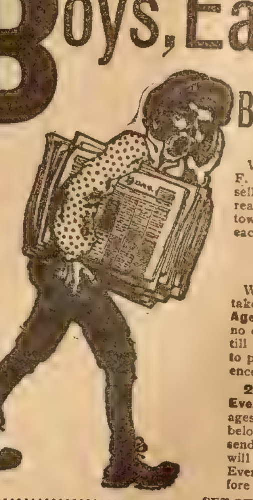

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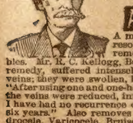

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passed out of sight and were not to be easily found again.

"I've a mind," said Tony, to go back to Tobias Green's shop and unmask Reddy Jenkins."

"He might laugh at you," replied Billy. "He is so wrapped up in that villian that it would be hard to convince him that he is not a perfect gentleman."

They were passing along one of the great retail streets of the city when a hand was laid upon Tony's arm.

Turning quickly he looked into the cold face and searching eyes of Jerrold.

"What's wanting?" demanded Tony, drawing back.

"I want you, sir," was the answer. "And this is your pal, eh?"

"I'm Tony's friend!" cried Billy, coming up at this moment.

"I thought so. Come along."

"You've no right to take us," Billy exclaimed as he glanced round in search of a policeman.

"I haven't, eh? I'll show you. No squealing, young gents. Come with me."

"Not without a fight," and Tony suddenly bolted away and then faced Jerrold.

"What's the matter, sir?" inquired a policeman who came up and addressed the man.

"Oh, is it you, Reilly? These young larks have been giving me some trouble. They're nephews of mine and I'm their legal guardian. I want to take them home, that's all."

"Take 'em home, sir," was the reply. "If they don't go I'll take 'em to the station house."

This was a new state of affairs and the audacity of Jerrold nearly took the boys' breath.

"Go with your uncle," advised the patrolman. "Ef ye don't ye'll soon be the worst little rats in the hull city. You've had better raisin', I've no doubt."

"They've been raised well enough," said Jerrold. "They ran away from home two weeks ago and I've been looking for them ever since."

"Then take 'em along and don't spare the sprouts ef they don't obey ye."

The next moment the policeman had hailed a cab which rattled to the sidewalk and halted.

"I've called a cab for ye," he exclaimed to Jerrold. "The young rats might give ye the slip otherwise."

Jerrold thanked the officer and in a moment had collared the boys, whom, being a man of prodigious strength, he hustled towards the vehicle.

Before either Tony or Billy could recover from their astonishment they were in the cab and Jerrold was seated facing them. He had given the driver orders in an undertone before the door had shut and in a moment the cab was rattling over the stones of the lighted streets.

"Not a whimper out of you," said the voice of the rascal. "It will be the better if you keep a still tongue in your heads."

"But you've no right to take us thus," cried Billy. "You wouldn't play this kind of hand at Allaback's."

"Hang Allaback's!" was the reply in the semi-darkness.

"Where are we going?" asked Tony.

"You'll find out directly. Silence just now is golden and you are my prisoners."

The boys made no further remarks for they knew none would help them, and settling back into the depths of the cab waited for what would turn up.

It seemed a long ride, but at last the rattling vehicle drew towards the pavement and came to a halt. The door was opened by Jerrold who stepped out.

The boys saw that they were in a part of the city which they had never visited.

It was a narrow and dark street and the houses were old frame ones almost ready to fall down from decay. That it was a mean quarter they did not doubt and when the hands of Jerrold pulled them from the cab they looked round for a better view of the vicinity.

"Straight ahead," commanded the sleek ruffian. "It's the house right before you."

Tony and Billy, clutched all the while by the grip of the rascal, were soon within the house. There was a foul smell in the dark hallway which they had entered and when Jerrold struck a match along the wall the flames revealed an undesirable place.

"Move on!" cried Jerrold, holding the match before his face.

At the end of the corridor was a door which the fellow kicked open and a flight of steps was revealed.

The boys hesitated and drew back.

"Down ye go!" said Jerrold. "I'm master in this place."

Forced to descend the stairway, Tony and Billy, partners now in misfortune, reached a landing which was wholly dark. They heard a door shut above them. Then came to their ears the faint sound of retreating footsteps and then—silence.

They could hardly believe that their adventure was not all a dream.

They stood together in the gloom and listened for a noise of some kind.

"This beats the dungeons we used to read in the books at Allaback's," said Billy's voice at last.

"It's bad enough, Billy, but it might be worse."

"I can't see how."

"He might have taken our lives."

(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

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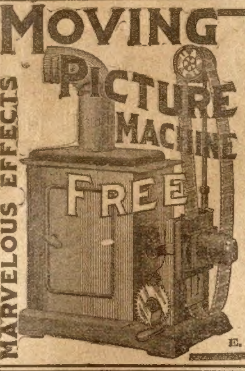

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The Fairy Corner

THE HO-HUM SPRITE

"You're sleepy, Robbie," said his mother.

"No, I'm not," protested the little fellow. "Please let me stay up a little longer."

"Not more than a few minutes, then," insisted his mother. "When I come back you must be ready to go upstairs."

As his mother left him Robbie leaned over the porch railing, a fair little picture of tiny manhood, there under the clustering, flowering vines. Discontentedly he gazed through the darkness at the lights on the distant grounds where older children were playing on the merry-go-round. It tired his eyes to look too long. With a sigh he sank back into a big rocker and let his eyelids fall. When he raised them again he felt like jumping. No! There could not be any mistake about it. It could be no trick of the imagination. Sitting on the railing and kicking his heels in space was the queerest looking fellow Robbie had ever seen.

Not more than a foot and a half high was the stranger—a boy, just as Robbie was, judging by his face, though perhaps a little older despite his very small size. This stranger, who seemed provokingly wide awake and merry, was dressed in the strangest kind of clothes. Over his legs were long, tight stockings, which ended in pointed shoes. The stranger's bright red jacket was covered with pictures of drowsy eyes and wide-open mouths. Rakishly perched on one side of his head was a pointed cap, under which coarse, carrotty hair cropped out. In that first astonished look all Robbie could think of was the clowns he had seen at the circus a fortnight before.

"Hullo, crosspatch!" said the stranger, cheerily.

"Who are you?" gasped Robbie, staring hard.

"Ho-hum!"

The stranger's mouth opened so wide that it seemed almost to blot out his comical, homely face. He yawned so fearfully that the boy in the chair felt his own mouth stretching wide open.

"Quit that!" cried Robbie, angrily. "You'll get me going with the gapes."

"That's my business," declared the small stranger.

"Mine, too," retorted Robbie, indignantly.

"Oh, is it?" asked the other, pertly. "'Scuse me. I didn't know."

Again his face went nearly out of sight behind one of those tremendous yawns. Robbie angrily tried to rise, half-minded to chase the other fellow off the grounds, but he found to his astonishment that he could not get out of the chair. The small stranger stopped yawning to laugh.

"Crosspatch!" he chuckled. "What makes you so ugly?"

"What makes you yawn so much?" cried Robbie, in a temper.

"The many years I have yawned!" said the stranger drowsily; "in fact, ever since the sand-man adopted me."

"Sand-man?" echoed Robbie.

"Of course. Haven't you ever heard of him?" inquired the small stranger in the clown's suit. "He's the little old man that goes around throwing sand in people's eyes and making them sleepy when it's really time for them to go to bed. I'm his adopted son. Ho-hum is my name. I don't often let little boys or girls see me, but I yawn in front of them, just the same, and off they go, gaping so they can't stop."

"I think you're real mean!" snorted Robbie. "It's a low business to be in."

"Why?" asked Ho-hum, cheerily. "Children ought to have more sleep. They need a lot of it. Yet they always fool their mothers as long as they can. It needs some one just like me to see that children go to bed, and that's why the sand-man says I'm worth my weight in gold."

"You don't weigh very much I guess," hinted Robbie, not very politely.

"Oh, I don't mind crosspatches. I'm used to them," chuckled Ho-hum good naturedly. "Nearly all kids are cross by the time I get around."

"I'm not a kid," protested Robbie, loftily. "I'm seven years old."

Ho-hum laughed again.

"Anyway, there's one thing," Robbie went on quickly. "You can't yawn very long before you have to go to sleep yourself. I know."

Ho-hum fairly sniggered. "Oh, I don't have to yawn all the time. I've my bag of tricks. Look here!"

Robbie had already noticed the strap that crossed Ho-hum's jacket. Now that odd elf drew forward a scarlet cloth bag and out of it yanked a laughable-looking model of a mouth on hinges.

"Watch me!" said Ho-hum, springing nimbly up on the railing. He turned his back, holding that ridiculous mouth behind him. With both hands he worked that mouth, making the jaws open and shut in a tantalizing way. Robbie kicked and squirmed, frantic with rage for the moment, but the yawns that came over him were so terrible that they nearly threw his own jaws out of joint.

Just in the nick of time Ho-hum dropped that hideous jaw back into his bag. In its place he snatched out something else and wheeled about, facing Robbie as he held up a shining, open eye, so bright that it might have been made out of a thousand little diamonds. Its effect was like magic. In an instant the boy was wide awake.

"Thank you," said Robbie, meekly. "But, if it's your business to make children yawn, why do you carry that bright eye?"

"Oh, I just give 'em a peek at it, so they won't pull mother's arm out going upstairs."

"What other tricks have you?" questioned Robbie, immensely interested.

"Well, the horn of glue for instance," replied Ho-hum, dropping the bright eye back into the bag and hauling out a cornucopia. He took a pinch of powder from it, throwing it into the boy's eyes. Robbie fell back, digging at his eyelids to keep them from sticking hard and tight. Chuckling, Ho-hum leaped down into the grass, wet his fingers with dew and returned to wash out Robbie's eyes, after which he held up the restoring eye once more.

"That's for the hardest cases, you know," explained Ho-hum.

"Have you any more?" asked Robbie, wild with curiosity, now that he was wide awake once more.

"Oh, dozens and dozens of them," nodded Ho-hum. "But I'm not going to show you all the tricks of the trade, young man! You may see the nightmare, though."

Out came a tiny object, shaped at first like a horse's head. In Ho-hum's hand the thing grew to a monster that shut the elf himself out from sight. Its flaming eyes made the little fellow shiver. Its great mouth opened as though to devour him. Robbie let out a yell of healthy terror, but Ho-hum only laughed, snapped the nightmare up into a small ball, dropping it back into his bag.

"Then there's the kitchee-kitchee, which makes sleepy youngsters laugh when they're tickled and want to snarl," went on Ho-hum, "and the dust-ball, which makes children so thirsty that they go into the house for a drink of water and get sent to bed."

"That's downright mean!" snapped Robbie.

"And—say! How'd you like to go 'round with me tonight, and see me use my bag of tricks on other folk?"

"May I?" cried Robbie, his eyes shining now. Oh, what a lark! To escape going to sleep himself and to wander about seeing other unwilling youngsters forced on to the Land of Nod!

"Come on!" ordered Ho-hum. He bounded up and then stood beside the boy, his feet resting in air. "Don't be afraid, young man, when you find yourself going up."

Ho-hum's left hand rested lightly under Robbie's right arm. Together they soared upward, the porch-roof moving to let them pass. Robbie did not even think to be afraid, it was such fun to fly like this! Yet he had one uneasy thought.

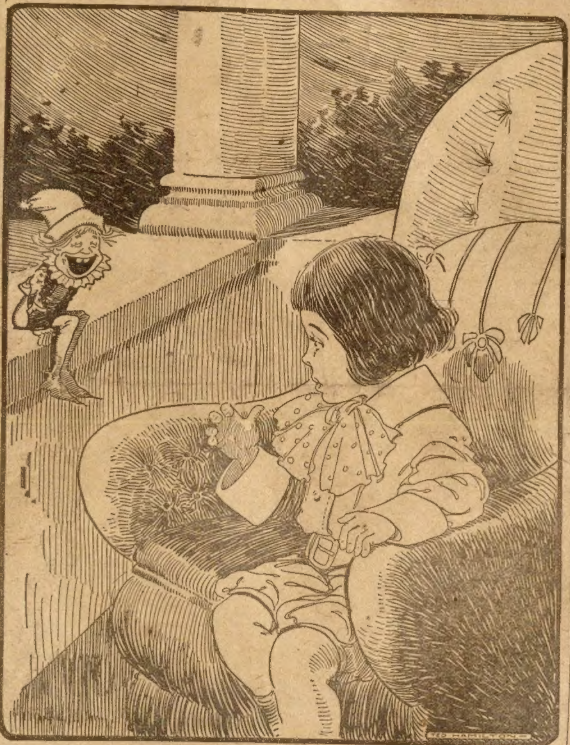
"Mamma will be awfully scared when she finds I'm gone," he said.

"Fine! I'm glad you thought of that," answered Ho-hum heartily. "I'll send her a wireless yawn, and she'll doze until you get back."

But even such a wonderful being as Ho-hum could forget, once in a while, to use his thinker! In order to pull that wireless yawn out of his bag of tricks Ho-hum took his hand away from under Robbie's arm, and down and down plunged Robbie. He let out a fearful yell as he dropped through the porch-roof once more and fell on his knees right in front of the chair. In the same instant the screen door slammed. As Robbie tried to rise his mother's voice sounded.

"So you weren't sleepy, Robbie," she cried. "I left you barely five minutes ago, and now you're so drowsy you can't keep in the chair."

In the chair? Asleep? Huh! If only he could tell her where he had been! But Ho-hum, hidden and probably grinning, was using both the gaping mouth and the horn of glue, and Robbie stumbled slowly up the stairs.



"Who are you?" gasped Bobbie.

THIS WASHER MUST PAY FOR ITSELF.

A MAN tried to sell me a horse once. He said it was a fine horse and had nothing the matter with it. I wanted a fine horse. But, I didn't know anything about horses much. And I didn't know the man very well, either.

So I told him I wanted to try the horse for a month. He said "All right, but pay me first, and I'll give you back your money if the horse isn't all right."

Well, I didn't like that. I was afraid the horse wasn't "all right" and that I might have to whistle for my money if I once parted with it. So I didn't buy the horse although I wanted it badly. Now this set me thinking.

You see I make Washing Machines—the "1900 Gravity" Washer.

And I said to myself, lots of people may think about my Washing Machine as I thought about the horse, and about the man who owned it.

But I'd never know, because they wouldn't write and tell me. You see I sell my Washing Machines by mail. I have sold over half a million that way.

So, thought I, it is only fair enough to let people try my Washing Machines for a month, before they pay for them, just as I wanted to try the horse.

Now, I know what our "1900 Gravity" Washer will do. I know it will wash the clothes, without wearing or tearing them, in less than half the time they can be washed by any other machine.

I know it will wash a tub full of very dirty clothes in Six minutes. I know no other machine ever invented can do that, without wearing out the clothes.

Our "1900 Gravity" Washer does the work so easy that a child can run it almost as well as a strong woman, and it don't wear the clothes, fray the edges nor break buttons the way all other machines do.

It just drives soapy water clear through the fibers of the clothes like the force pump might.

So, said I to myself, I will do with my "1900 Gravity" Washer what I wanted the man to do with the horse. Only I won't wait for people to ask. I'll offer first, and I'll make good the offer every time.

Let me send you a "1900 Gravity" washer on a month's free trial. I'll pay the freight out of my own pocket, and if you don't want the machine after you've used it a month, I'll take it back and pay the freight too. Surely that is fair enough, isn't it?

Doesn't it prove that the "1900 Gravity" Washer must be all that I say it is?

And you can pay me out of what it saves for you. It will save its whole cost in a few months, in wear and tear on the clothes alone. And then it will save 50 cts. to 75 cents a week over that in washwoman's wages. If you keep the machine after the month's trial, I'll let you pay for it out of what it saves you. If it saves you 60 cents a week, send me 50 cents a week till paid for. I'll take that cheerfully and I'll wait for my money until the machine itself earns the balance.

Drop me a line to-day, and let me send you a book about the "1900 Gravity" Washer that washes clothes in 6 minutes.

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Tony Tripp's Adventures.

(Continued from page twenty-five.)

"[illegible]l, we're liable to spend the rest [illegible]f days in this terrible place. And of[illegible]'s will never know what became Allaba[illegible] of us."

For [illegible]me time they talked thus when Tony [illegible]lared that while life lasted he would [illegible]t surrender hope and at his sugge[illegible]n they began to explore their dunge[illegible].

"Wh[illegible]s that strange noise?" suddenly ex[illegible]imed Billy, clutching Tony's sleeve.

"I[illegible]unds like the swish of water."

"[illegible]must be near the river. Ah, it is the[illegible]r! But there's no passage leading [illegible]. Jerrold made sure of that before he brought us here."

The walls of the prison were of stone and the boys came back to their starting point without having discovered a single loophole of escape.

The dungeon was devoid of anything comfortable, not a single chair nor a cot and for a few moments despair seemed to overwhelm them.

There was no way of telling darkness from daylight in that horrid place and they doubted not that they were to be left to perish there by Jerrold and his partners in crime.

Of course the door at the head of the steps had been made fast from the opposite side and there was no way of successfully attacking it. This the young prisoners soon discovered.

"There's water about my feet," suddenly cried Billy, springing back. "It wasn't there when we first came into this dungeon."

"It's the tide perhaps."

"Yes, and it may fill the old cellar!"

There was danger of this, as Tony well knew, but he did not express his fears to his friend.

The water gradually became a little deeper, driving them to the farthest wall and there their retreat was shut off.

All at once Billy uttered a cry and fell against his companion. The same sound which had startled him had fallen upon Tony's ears as well.

It was the cry of an animal of some kind and it seemed to come from overhead.

"If we only had some matches!" said Tony.

"I'll make one more search for them," was the reply. "Ah, here's a broken match. Now if it's but the friction end we'll be all O. K."

The next moment Billy drew his "find" across the stone wall and to the joy of both boys a spark leaped into being.

"Good!" exclaimed Tony. "We're not so unlucky after all."

[illegible] held the blazing splinter up and [illegible]ed around.

[illegible] first they saw nothing and then falling against the old wall again Tony's chum pointed upward.

"Look! Tony, look!" he cried. "Yonder's the thing that made that horrible noise."

Tony looked up and beheld squatted on a beam that projected into the cellar an animal that at first sight sent a shiver of fright through every part of his frame.

Two fiery eyeballs seemd to bulge towards them and while they gazed without a word the grotesque object moved and whined dolefully.

It was a great black cat, larger than anything of the kind they had ever seen, and the monster seemed about to launch herself upon them.

The match went out amid tense silence. The cat vanished with the light and the boys heard the beating of their own hearts.

"Take hope, Billy," said Tony, breaking the silence. "All's not lost yet. If the cat can get in here there may be a way out for us."

"I believe it, Tony. I'll get out of here if she can."

Another feline whine answered the boy and then the dreadful silence came on again.

The continuation of this fine story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription.

* * *

The Black Horse Queen.

(Continued from page three.)

physician and a fallen minister thus associated?"

"Life is full of oddities."

"And always will be, I suppose. The oddities of this case end here. As soon as I get my strength back I renew digging for gold, and that will be occupation enough for muscle and mind. Shall we go out?"

They went, and at once found something new to attract their attention. Several miners were in a group, and speaking and gesticulating with animation that approached bitter fierceness.

"Still harping on the old matter!" murmured Reddington.

"I'm not so sure of that," replied Dale. "What should fan their tempers into such violence? There must be something new. Come!" and he led the way toward the group.

"They are at the boiling point," Reddington proceeded.

"They have an object under consideration that I can't make out. It stirs them up to a dangerous mood, and it's lucky nobody is here for them to wreak their passion upon. We will solve this mystery."

This extraordinary story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Strange things happen, read it. Watch the Ledger in the coming months and you will find in it some of the most interesting stories ever written. With every month we will try to give you a better and more entertaining paper, so if you are not already a subscriber, you better send in a year's subscription and have the Ledger regularly. Take our advice and attend to this today.

* * *

The Easier Way.

First Burglar—Stung!

Second Burglar—This job was cleared up on the inside.

First Burglar—We'll have to start a bank ourselves, old pal. The thing is done differently now.

* * *

Drawbacks to Higher Education.

"I s'pose that boy of your is havin' a pretty lively time at college?"

"Yep. He was jes' gettin' through th' chicken pox when he came down with the mumps."

* * *

The Misnomer.

"What! Ten years in an office and you've never once been promoted. What kind of a man do you work for?"

"A promoter."

* * *

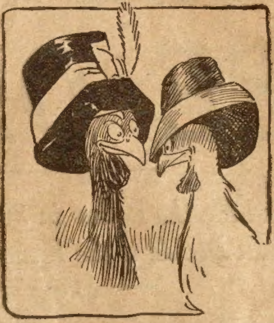
Good for Evil.

Tommy returned sobbing from school with a very black eye. "But I'll pay Billy Blobbs off for this in the morning," he said. "No, no," replied his mother, "you must return good for evil. I'll make you a nice jam tart and you may take it to Billy Blobbs and say, 'I told mother how you'd punished me and she says I must return good for evil, so here's a nice tart for you.'"

The following morning, with tart in one hand and his books in the other, poor Tommy hastened joyfully to school, only to return in a sadder plight than the day before, saying between his sobs: "Mother, I gave your message and tart to Billy Blobbs and he's blacked my other eye and says he wants you to send him a pudding!"

* * *

Dear Friends.



"That new photograph you had taken is perfectly lovely!

"Oh, is it?"

"Yes, I had to ask who it was!"

The Real Trouble.

Native—Why did you leave the civilized East and come out here to the wild, unsettled West to live?

Newcomer—Because the folks around where I lived slandered me and said mean things about me.

Native—Why didn't you make them prove what they said?

Newcomer—They did.

* * *

Distinctions.

"Did you say that actress has a bad temper?"

"No," replied the manager. "We used to call it a bad temper, but now her salary has become so large that we have to refer to it as temperament."

* * *

One Way.

"I am working my way through college."

"Brave girl. How do you earn money?"

"Well, father gives me $10 for every singing lesson I don't take."

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Make a cross in the square for organs—or pianos—or both. Or write your name and address on a postal card or in a letter, stating which you want—piano or organ description. Don't enclose any stamp. I pay all charges. Write plainly.

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CURE YOUR RHEUMATISM

A Dollar Box of the World's Greatest Rheumatis
and Gout Remedy Mailed

FREE ON TRIAL!

If It Helps You, You Send Me the Dollar in 30 Days---If It Fails It Costs You Nothing. Y
Alone Shall Decide if the Remedy Has Earned the Dollar or Not.

HAS CURED MANY CASES OF 30 AND 40 YEARS' STANDIN

"GLORIA TONIC" Has Conquered the Demon Rheumatism in Thousands of Cases

It is so absolutely harmless that no one need hesitate for a moment about giving it a trial.

The chief ingredients of Gloria Tonic are:

Stillingia, Iodide of Potassium, Poke Root, Guaiac Resin and Sarsaparilla.

Any person can take these remedies in any reasonable amount with perfect safety, and the results have been found to be astonishing. It has been proven that this combination makes up the best rheumatism remedy in existence, having actually cured many stubborn cases of over 30 and 40 years' standing—even in persons of old age. It is only in "Gloria Tonic" that you can get the above combination ready for use.

RHEUMATISM
(Acute)

Oh, THE TORTURE OF "JOINT PAINS" as acute rheumatism used to be called.

No torment this side of the infernal regions could be worse. When every movement of an arm, or a leg, or the head will send those intense shooting pains and make you wish you were never born. Of all the hopeless, forlorn and pitiable creatures on earth a sufferer from acute rheumatism is about the worst.

But, strange to say, one of the worst features of acute rheumatism is the fact that on some days you are practically free from pain. The bad feature of this lies in the fact that most people will stop taking treatment when the pain is no longer felt and thereby permit their systems to become weakened and susceptible to still worse and more malignant forms of rheumatism.

If you are subject to rheumatism in any form there is **ONLY ONE COURSE** for you to follow, and that is to take **GLORIA TONIC** until you can safely say that **EVERY TRACE** of this dread malady is **ENTIRELY ERADICATED** from your system. No remedy is surer—none quite as sure—as **GLORIA TONIC.**

Send the coupon now for the **DOLLAR BOX ON TRIAL.**

RHEUMATISM
(Chronic)

FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY, if you know any poor, miserable creature who was originally created as a man (or woman) and who now, through suffering and torment, has been **TWISTED INTO HELPLESSNESS — JOINTS SWOLLEN AND CREAKING, ENDS** of the **BONES ENLARGED,** and in **CONSTANT AGONY** of pain—I say, if you know of such an one, take this page to him and beg him to send the coupon today for this $1.00 **PACKAGE** of **GLORIA TONIC FREE ON TRIAL.**

Perhaps destructive changes of the cartilages of the joints have made a cripple of him and he is resigned and hopeless, expecting nothing else but that he will have to go through life on crutches. Tell him there is still a chance for him. **CHEER HIM** with the news of the **CURES** that are told about on this page. Women are more liable to chronic rheumatism than men and a crippled woman is probably the most miserable of human beings.

I Cured Myself First, Then My Friends and Acquaintances, and Now I Offer Any Suffering Reader of The Saturday Blade a Regular One Dollar Box

FREE ON TRIAL

JOHN A. SMITH,

Proprietor of "Gloria Tonic" the Standard Rheumatism and Gout Remedy of the World.

All Sufferers from this dread Malady, **Rheumatism,** at once appreciate the spirit of this offer. If you had suffered for a period of years as you are probably suffering now, and after you had tried everything under the sun without relief, then if you happened accidentally to stumble across an **absolute** and **sure cure**—wouldn't you want to show your joy and thankfulness by telling other sufferers about it? And wouldn't you welcome a chance to say to all men and women, "Come brother—come all—throw away the crutches, straighten out the tired muscles, rest that poor aching back and join this thankful procession of the sound and well?" Of course you would. And that is exactly what my remedy has done in thousands of cases. Send me the coupon to the right and if you will take my remedy the way any remedy for a chronic disease should be taken, I believe I will make you a well and happy person. Send me the coupon to the right and I will do exactly as I agree.

JOHN A. SMITH.

A Few of the Many Thousan
of Persons Cured by My Home Treatment:

TEXAS LEGISLATOR SURPRISED

Stiff Knees Limbered Up. Pain Driven Away. Feels Like a Boy.

For several years I suffered with rheumatism in my knees and shoulder. My knees were so stiff and painful I could hardly squat down or rise again when down. It was painful to walk any very great distance. I also suffered much with sciatica. I did not believe that rheumatism could be cured, refusing to buy a "remedy" from an old friend, who assured me that he had been cured of a case of thirty years' standing that had stiffened his knees and elbows, that his arms were so stiff that he had not scratched his head in thirty years. I saw him run across the street and throw a baseball like a boy. He forced a package of "Gloria Tonic" upon me as a gift with a promise on my part to take the medicine by the directions. After taking thirty-six tablets in nine days I was surprised to the degree of ecstacy to discover that I could use my knees as well as when a child, without a twinge or a pain. I ought to have given this testimonial four years ago, but it is as true today as it was then.—Very truly yours, J. T. Hamilton, Mercury, Texas.

70 YEARS OLD, FEELS LIKE TWO

I can say to you I received your wonderful "Gloria Tonic," and I will say it has done me more good than any other medicine I have ever tried in my life. I have been a great sufferer from rheumatism for a long time, and this day I
don't feel any misery of the rheuma
I am cured. My wife joins me in
and we both wish to give thanks to
as the first great cause of every
and then render due benevolence to
I am now 70 years old, and I feel
I can do as much work as any one
and I believe it is your wonderful
that did it.—Very truly yours,
Burger, Arcola, N. C.

PHYSICIANS FELL DO

Best in Lone Star State Could Giv
Aid to Rheumatic Sufferer. Tri
For Years, But Could Accomplish Nothing.

I feel I am well of that tortu
suffering with rheumatism. "G
Tonic" has cured me. I had suffere
years and was under the treatme
six doctors, the best physicians in
state, they could do nothing for me
suffering was unbearable, and wh
found your "Gloria Tonic" I bega
take it, and soon began to get
which I had not had for years. "G
Tonic" has done so much, everybo
so delighted to see me well, for the
all given me up, thought I would
get well. Your medicine is cert
known here far and wide, for I w
low with rheumatism, and nothing
ever been done that ever gave m
least relief until I got your "Gloria
ic." Thank you again for your kin
to me, and I am praising "Gloria T
all the time, for it certainly is the
cine for rheumatism. I wish every
ferer would find "Gloria Tonic" an
well of such suffering.—Very truly
Lizzie Campbell, Santa Anna, Tex.

Coupon for a $1.00 Box of "Gloria Tonic" on Tri

JOHN A. SMITH, 6082 Smith Bldg., Milwaukee, Wis.

I am a sufferer from rheumatism and want to be cured. If you will s
me a $1.00 box of "Gloria Tonic" on trial I will use it and send you the $
if I am benefited. If I am not cured or benefited I pay nothing.

Name ....

Street No. ....

City ....

State ....